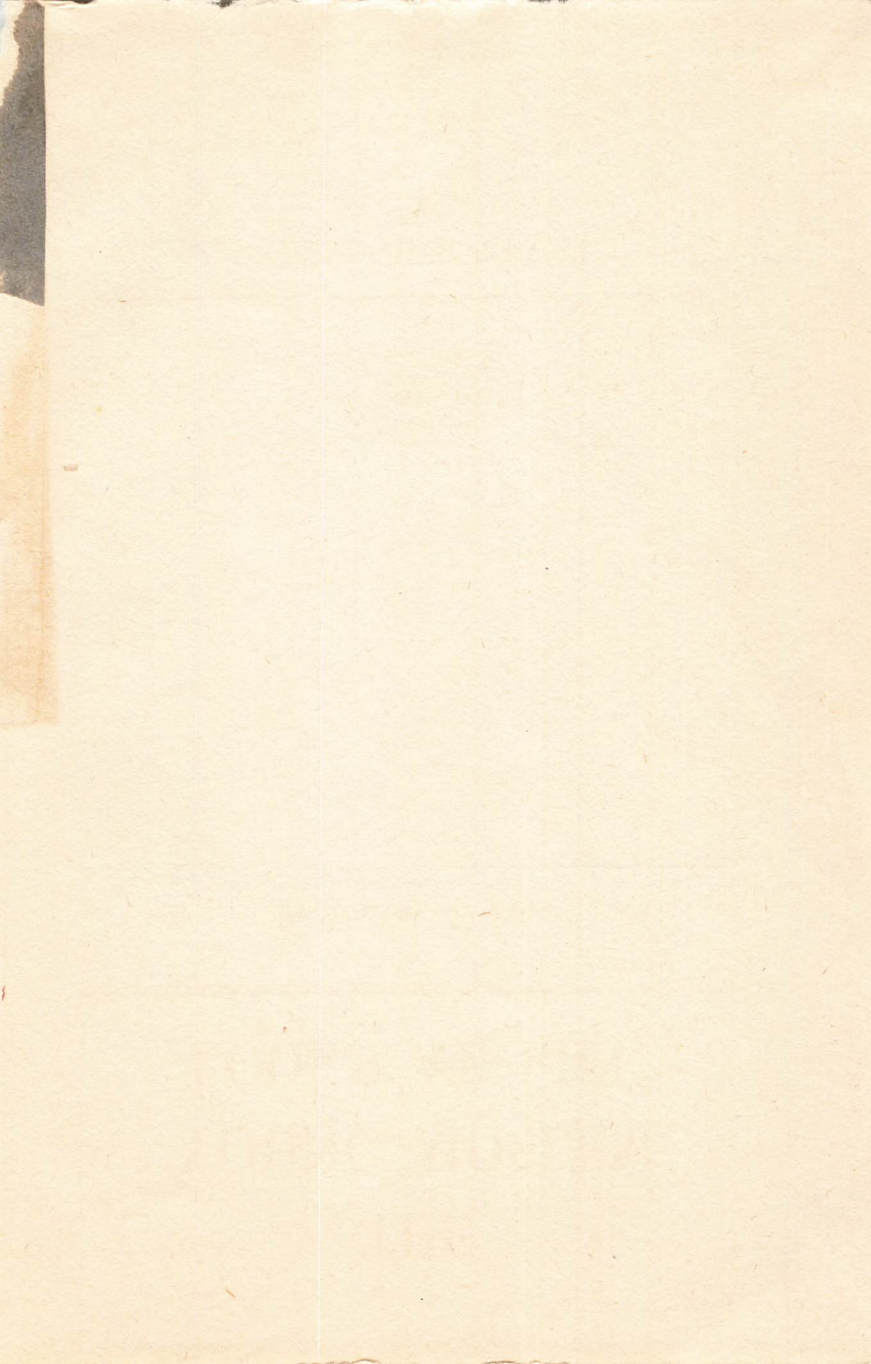


THE YOUNG MOSLEM LOOKS AT LIFE





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# THE YOUNG MOSLEM LOOKS AT LIFE

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*By Murray T. Titus*



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MURRAY T. TITUS, D.D., PH.D., has since 1910 been a missionary to the Moslem peoples of North India. He has received degrees from Ohio Wesleyan University and the Hartford Seminary Foundation, and has studied at the University of Chicago. Upon the completion of his college course he was sent to India under the auspices of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and during the first three years of his service there taught philosophy in Reid (now Lucknow) Christian College. In 1916 he was made a district superintendent in the North India Conference, a position which he still holds. In 1932-33 he was convener of the Committee on Work among Moslems of the National Christian Council of India, Burma and Ceylon, and in 1935 he was one of the Council's representatives at the meeting of the International Missionary Council at Northfield, Massachusetts.

Dr. Titus is an associate editor of *The Moslem World* and is a frequent contributor to that quarterly. He is co-editor of the Religious Quest of India series, to which he has contributed *Indian Islam*, a volume published in 1930 by the Oxford University Press.

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TO  
THE CHRISTIAN YOUNG PEOPLE  
OF THE WEST



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## PREFACE

YOUTH everywhere is interested in the problems of youth, whether they be of their own or other countries and races. It is taken for granted, therefore, that the youth of America, with its ever widening social and humanitarian outlook, will welcome a study of Moslem youth as it faces the problems of life in these days of kaleidoscopic change. These changes affect both the social and the spiritual aspects of life. Old authorities are being questioned, and familiar restraints are being cast aside. Desperate and vain attempts are being made to inherit both worlds—the ancient order of Islam, and the material blessings of Western modern civilization. In practically every Moslem country in the world this tension between the old and the new is growing stronger every year. Finally, something snaps, and we have a new Turkey, a new Persia (now christened Iran), a new Iraq, a new Egypt, and some day we shall have a new Arabia!

In this process a shedding of religious and social ideas inevitably takes place. Moslem youth has a great part to play in this transformation and it is doing it bravely and with courage. The author has attempted (however feebly) to portray not only the significant



changes that are taking place, and those which to his thinking must yet take place in Islam, but also the help that must be given by Christianity if the people of Moslem lands are ever to enjoy that fullness of life and purity of character which comes from full and free contact with Jesus Christ. In this connection the Christian churches of the West cannot and dare not shirk their obligation to the world of Islam.

The author has drawn on many sources, and has had the help of many people through the years of his experience to whom he is unspeakably indebted for the material that has gone into this book. He would, however, like to thank especially Miss Ruth Seabury, secretary of education of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, for her helpful counsel on the plan and general line of treatment. He is also deeply indebted to Professor Herrick B. Young, of the Alborz College of Teheran, for his valuable suggestions in connection with the final editing of the text.

MURRAY T. TITUS

*Budaun, India*  
*November, 1936*

## CHAPTER ONE

### IN THE WAY OF ALLAH

ONE summer day, while the sun shone brightly in the sapphire sky over Central Asia, Mohammed Beg lay amid the flowers of a mountain pasture watching the herds of grazing sheep. He was thinking—thinking of his grandfather, now an old man, who was soon to start on the pilgrimage to Mecca. His grandfather, a sincere and devout Moslem, had been planning this pilgrimage for many years. Every Moslem hopes to make the journey to Mecca once in a lifetime, and thus fill up one's full measure of devotion to the sacred law of Islam.

Mohammed Beg was deeply interested in the old man's preparations, and the more he thought of the great journey the more he longed to go with his grandfather, Abdullah. How grand if he, too, could be a *haji* (the title given to one who has made the *haji*, or pilgrimage to Mecca). In all his life the aged Abdullah had never left his home city of Kashgar, and from his birth had lived high up on the "roof of the world" in the heart of Central Asia. He had never crossed those vast ranges of the highest mountains of the world which separate his native land of Chinese Turkestan from the scorching plains of India.



He had always thought of that journey as perilous, for the roads across the mountains are narrow and steep, and travel is possible only on foot or horseback. But now as the old man contemplated the visit to the Holy City of Islam his fears were dissipated, and he eagerly anticipated the realization of his long-cherished dream.

Mohammed Beg's longing to go was of a somewhat different nature. Oh, yes, he would love to see Mecca, of course, and know the joy of keeping the Law in full, to see that sacred city of Islam, to be one of the great brotherhood that gathers there in throngs from all parts of the Moslem world. But more than this, as a lad of nineteen he had a youth's keen desire to see the world, and to observe the different manners and customs of other lands.

What sheer delight it would be to see the great cities of India, to say nothing of the famous cities of Arabia, the Moslem Holy Land. Of course, it would be hard to get out of those rugged mountains, thought Mohammed Beg, and it would be many months before he and his grandfather could return to Kashgar. Disease might seize them suddenly, and even death might prevent their return. But he did not dwell long on these possibilities, indeed they but served to emphasize the fact that his poor old grandfather needed a companion to help him in all the difficulties of the long and dangerous journey. At last he said to himself, "I shall go. If it is the will of Allah, I, too, shall see Mecca."

Filled with his new enthusiasm, Mohammed Beg went to his family and told them of his plan to accompany Abdullah. Fortunately, he received their approval, and for several days he and his grandfather were busy purchasing clothes and supplies for the long trek. Finally, with their bundles packed, they started off on foot, after saying many farewells mingled with joy and sorrow, and began the journey of many months. Southward over the mountains toward Srinagar, in Kashmir, they plodded. Here and there they passed the villages of their own people perched above the narrow footpath on the side of the cliff. Like themselves, these villagers had never left their ancient homes, except a few traders among them, who would occasionally drive their flocks of sheep and goats all the way down to Srinagar laden with bags of merchandise to be exchanged for salt and tobacco. Like them, too, these people were all followers of the Prophet Mohammed, and wherever they stopped to chat with the villagers they always were sure to receive encouragement for their pilgrimage and a prayer for their safety on the way. Mohammed Beg was the envy of the young men he met, who heard with eager ears of the great adventure on which he was starting.

At the end of the first day our two travelers sought out a *serai*, or resthouse, and stopped for the night. These *serais* are indescribably crude, and without any sort of conveniences. They are merely shelters from storms and the heat of the sun. It was already half



filled with travelers, but Mohammed Beg selected an unoccupied corner, and there they opened their packs and spread their scanty bedding for the night on the bare mud floor. But before retiring they must cool their meal of meat stew and rough unleavened cakes and for this purpose they had brought with them a few pots and pans. Finally, after they had eaten and when the night was well advanced, they joined the other Moslem occupants of the resthouse in offering the last or fifth prayer of the day, and witnessed to their devotion to Islam by reciting its brief but powerful creed—"There is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is the apostle of Allah."

Day after day this program was repeated as they trudged through the high passes of the Karakoram range. Occasionally other travelers would join them. Before long they were in western Tibet. Once they had dropped down on to the desolate plateau across which the upper Indus flows they met quaint Buddhist priests carrying their prayer wheels. Their religion was as different from that of Mohammed Beg as day from night. They did not have five stated times of prayer every day, no bowing and prostrating. No even verbal repetition—the mere whirling of the wheel which contained written prayers in Tibetan characters sufficed to complete their acts of devotion and of course the more whirling the better!

As they traveled farther down the valley of the Indus towards India they encountered Moslems with customs never known in Kashgar. Abdullah was

amazed to discover that there were different sects in Islam, and Mohammed Beg was puzzled by their strange ways. The boy knew enough Hindustani, the language used over large parts of northern India and adjacent regions of Central Asia, to ask them about their beliefs and practices.

"Do you people go to Mecca for the pilgrimage?" he asked one of them.

"No," the man replied, "our holy place is Karbala, near Baghdad, where lies the grave of beloved Husain, the martyred son of Ali, and we go there by ship from India. When our dead are buried we put pieces of wood with sacred inscriptions in Arabic in their armpits, and turn their faces toward Karbala."

Weary but jubilant as every milepost was passed, our travelers went on and on until, by way of the lofty pass known as Zoji La, they dropped down, down, down into the wild valley of the roaring Sind River. They followed its narrow wooded gorges until they reached that region of surpassing beauty, the Vale of Kashmir. With the green rice fields of the valley encircled with snowy ranges, this spot has been well described as "an emerald set in diamonds."

However, Mohammed Beg was not so much impressed with the beauty of the scenery as with the fact that they had come thus far successfully over the most tedious part of their journey. From here on they would not have to depend on their own legs. Automobiles, trains, and ships would take them the rest of the long journey to Mecca, and from now on



every day would be full of interesting sights and new wonders.

Already he was discovering that, though many miles away from home, all the Moslems whom he met were his brothers. They all used the same holy Koran. They all said their prayers in Arabic with him just as the Moslems did back in Kashgar, and as he knew he would find them doing all over India.

They found themselves in Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir, on a Friday, the Moslem Sabbath, so they said their prayers in the great mosque with thousands of the faithful. Mohammed Beg was interested in what he saw, and often surprised. As for old Abdullah, he was shocked and horrified. There was so much hustle and bustle in Srinagar, so many tooting automobiles rushing about, that they were afraid to cross the street. The buildings, too, were so different. They were told they were patterned after the architecture of Wilaiyat (Europe).

On that Friday in Srinagar, when all the good Moslems he knew left their work and closed their shops to observe the Sabbath of Islam, Mohammed Beg noticed that some Moslem merchants bought and sold as usual. This gave him a rude shock, for in Kashgar the bazaars closed from sunset Thursday night until sunset Friday night, the Sabbath period.

The next day bright and early they took their seats in the bus that was to take them on the next stage of their journey. It was their first ride in an automobile. Faster than they had ever dreamed possible

our two pilgrims sped down the Jhelum Valley two hundred miles to the railway station at Rawalpindi, where still more thrills, surprises and shocks awaited them. They had a wait of several hours before they took the train for Bombay, so while Abdullah guarded the luggage Mohammed Beg went about seeing the sights.

As he walked through the streets of the bazaar it seemed to Mohammed Beg that he was in a world of magic. There were lights that could be turned on and off at will by pressing a button, and without striking a match. Water ran from pipes, and one could drink his fill without having to carry it from a distant spring or stream. It was hot, but people kept cool with whirring fans that worked by electric power. He heard a phonograph for the first time, and marveled as he listened to that whirling black disc recite a whole chapter from the Koran just as the Moslem clergy would do in real life! He saw men speak into a black horn-shaped thing, and was told that they were speaking to their distant friends over wires that were strung for miles all over the country.

Mohammed Beg rushed back to old Abdullah with tales of these wonders. Not only did he tell his grandfather of these strange things, but he shared with him his disturbed thoughts. The Moslems here in this strange city seemed to be so busily engaged in the pursuit of wealth that they were not much concerned with the religious way of life. Could it be that religion did not matter so much as he and his



family had been taught to believe? No, never! Such thoughts were intolerable.

The two pilgrims were so excited they could scarcely eat before the train came. At last with a great ringing of bells and tooting of whistles the train rolled into the station from Peshawar. Gingerly Mohammed Beg and old Abdullah climbed into a third-class compartment, crowded with men, women and children from the many provinces and religious groups of India. All stared at the two travelers from Kashgar, with their Mongolian features, and their curious, heavy wool clothes, which were so hot and which seemed so strange beside the loose white garments of the others.

In fact, Mohammed Beg and his grandfather did not feel very comfortable. They began to realize that they not only were in another world, but that they did not fit into it. It all seemed to be moving too fast for them. They wondered if they could get used to it. The train traveled so fast that at first it frightened them, but gradually they accepted speed as an inseparable part of their new experience. When they saw their first airplane soaring overhead at a hundred miles an hour they took it as a matter of course. "One need be surprised at nothing now," said Mohammed Beg to old Abdullah, who nodded and muttered a half-dazed assent.

As time slipped by, and Mohammed Beg had occasion to notice the habits and customs of his fellow Moslems in the train compartment, he was continu-

ally measuring them by the old familiar religious standards of his own country. It was second nature to him to do that. In Kashgar a good Moslem is known by the regularity with which he says his five daily prayers. There were some, he noted, who were faithful to their religious duties. These, even if the train were moving at the time of prayer, would do as he and Abdullah did, carefully place their prayer rugs on the long benches of the compartment and, facing Mecca as nearly as they could, faithfully perform their devotions. If the train stopped and they could get out to say their prayers on the station platform, so much the better. But he noticed that where there was one faithful Moslem who would do so, there were dozens who carelessly neglected their prayers altogether.

Falling into conversation with some of their fellow Moslem passengers, Mohammed Beg learned that more changes were taking place among the Moslems of India than he had ever dreamed were possible. Some of the young men with whom he talked told him about the Moslem university at Aligarh, where the old classical studies of the Islamic curriculum have been given up in favor of the modern scientific courses of the West. He learned that many of the young men are today studying English instead of Arabic. It was pointed out to him that these changes in education were necessary, if the Moslem community was to keep abreast of the times, and if it was to keep pace with the other progressive nations



and communities of the world. These young men insisted that one could very easily adapt Islam to the developments of civilization, and that it was the duty of the present-day Moslems to do so.

But Mohammed Beg was doubtful. He greatly feared that one could not go in for innovations without forsaking religion. His experience with the prayerless Moslems he had seen confirmed him in this opinion. He was still more sure of this when he learned of the growing number of Moslem women who shamelessly go about with uncovered faces before strange men. He was told that they dined openly with men, and regularly played games in mixed clubs, where both men and women meet freely as is done among the Christians.

Later on in Bombay he learned that some of these universities attended by Moslem youth have anti-God societies and that a growing number of these youth have given up Islam in everything but name. Their religion is nothing more to them than a social club. Many of them use it solely to further their own selfish social and political ends. They have come to feel no need for religion, no need for God.

To Mohammed Beg this was a most unholy and blasphemous situation, and he felt that somehow the longer he stayed in such an atmosphere the more chance there was of his being contaminated. However, in reality he did not fear so much for himself. He had been brought up in the faith and he was sure he would never lose his belief in Allah.

"Allahu akbar [God is most great]," sighed Abdullah. "No matter what the rest of the Moslem world does, we shall remain true Moslems."

In spite of these modernistic tendencies Mohammed Beg felt sure that there were millions who were still unshaken in their faith in Mohammed and in the holy Koran. In fact, he met many on his journey across India who did not believe that their religion was in danger, and who were sure that in the end the way of Allah would prevail.

Still his experience in India had disturbed him greatly, and he was glad that they would be moving on very soon. What a relief it would be to board the pilgrim ship for Mecca, and be once more among true believers, who were not contaminated by these modern ideas.

Mohammed Beg and Abdullah had been depressed by the fact that they found very few people talking about the pilgrimage in India. Here and there they met an old man who was planning to go; but for the most part people seemed to be too busy with their own affairs to think about the obligations of their holy faith. It was daily being impressed upon them that there was a new age—an age about which Kashgar knew nothing at all!

When the day of sailing from Bombay arrived Mohammed Beg and Abdullah were full of joy and enthusiasm. They went to the dock as early as possible armed with their inoculation certificates, a requirement which British authority in India has introduced



to prevent the spread of smallpox and cholera. With hundreds of other pilgrims they passed the medical inspection and boarded the ship for Jidda, the port from which they would travel the fifty-three miles inland to Mecca.

While the more wealthy travelers occupied cabins, the great majority slept right on the deck itself. Some provided themselves with folding camp cots, and a good supply of fruit and canned food. However, Abdullah and Mohammed Beg were content to eat such food as they could get from the ship's cook in addition to the bread and cheese they had brought with them.

Mohammed Beg and his grandfather found a place for themselves under an awning that covered the rear deck, spread out their belongings, and prepared to make themselves as comfortable as possible. Most of the pilgrims on this boat were Indians. But they were from all over India and Burma, and there were even Afghans from Kabul. The few women in the party were, of course, each accompanied by a father, husband or brother.

Mohammed Beg again enjoyed exchanging experiences with his fellow travelers. He was especially eager to discuss his trip through India. Much of what he had seen and heard he could not understand, but at least he had seen and heard enough to feel that either the reformers of Islam were wrong, or those of the orthodox party were wrong. If he and old Abdullah were traveling "in the way of Allah," then



there were many who were following the strange ways of the reformers. Surely these must be headed for *Jehannum* (the fires of hell)!

Mohammed Beg was amazed to hear from one of the Afghan pilgrims of the efforts made in Afghanistan by King Amanullah to introduce reforms, and how the people would not tolerate them. This bold reformer had tried to do away with the veil, and even his own wife had gone unveiled in the presence of men. He had tried to introduce the education of girls, and the wearing of Western clothes; but the people were too orthodox to stand for such new ideas. They revolted and drove him from his throne, and from his country. And today he lives the life of an exile somewhere in Europe, in company with the former sultan of Turkey and others who have lost their thrones in recent times.

India, of course, Mohammed Beg pointed out, was different. It was ruled by foreign Christians, and Moslems were not able to live there as true Moslems should. Perhaps that was the explanation. However, if they were true Moslems they should leave the country and migrate to some strictly Moslem land where they could practise their religion according to the law of Islam. Mohammed Beg remembered that when he was a child an Indian Moslem family had come to Kashgar. This they had done because agitators had preached against the foreign rule and urged all true followers of Islam to move out of India and seek religious freedom elsewhere.

But if the situation in India disturbed him, the situation in Turkey and Iran, as he heard of these countries from his fellow travelers, upset Mohammed Beg altogether. He was told that if he thought Indian Moslems were lax, he should see the innovations which Mustafa Kamal Atatürk had introduced into Turkey. There religion had been pushed into second place, and nationalism had assumed first importance in the thinking of the people. The Turks had deposed the caliph, and Islam had been so adapted to the conditions of modern life that little more than a shadow of the former religion existed. The people were so changed in their manners, laws and customs, and even dress, that they could not be distinguished from Christians. They were not even allowed to wear the red fez with the black tassel any more. Both in Turkey and Iran the women brazenly appeared in public unveiled. He was told that if he went to Turkey he would not be able to understand the prayers, or the Friday sermon, for both must be said in Turkish rather than in Arabic. Surely the Turks and Iranians had become *kafirs* (unbelievers), and had forsaken the example and teaching of the Prophet!

It was all very confusing. But what could he, a boy from Central Asia, do about it? In the meantime he was glad that he was moving toward Mecca, the Holy City, the place of pure and unadulterated Islam. How glad he would be to get there! Surely Mecca would bring peace and reassurance concerning these serious questions.



After the ship had passed Aden and had entered the Red Sea, the excitement of the passengers increased. In a short time now they would be in Jidda, and before then they must perform the ceremonies for the last stage of the sacred pilgrimage.

At last the day arrived when the first of the ceremonies for the pilgrimage must be performed. Mohammed Beg and Abdullah, in company with the other hundreds of passengers, very carefully bathed themselves, trimmed their nails, and combed their beards. They then removed their ordinary clothes and put on the *ihram*, or the pilgrim's sacred robe, consisting of two seamless pieces of cloth. One of these they put around the waist and the other they threw over the shoulders, leaving the head uncovered. In place of their heavy Turki boots they must now wear light sandals, or go barefoot. From now on until the pilgrimage was finished they were not permitted to shave any part of the body, trim the nails, or wear any other garment than the sacred robe of the pilgrim. And now, dressed as pilgrims should be, Mohammed Beg and Abdullah recited with others who had joined them the "songs of the pilgrims":

Here am I for thy service, O Allah, I am ready.

O Allah, I purpose to perform the pilgrimage;

Make it easy for me, O Allah;

I offer thee my flesh, and my hair, and my blood.

I have vowed to abstain from women, and perfume,  
and clothes

Out of desire to please thee!

As the ship approached its destination the joy of the pilgrims became more intense, and every eye strained to catch the first glimpse of Jidda, the city of Eve, the grandmother (*jidda*) of the human race, whose tomb was pointed out on the east side of the city, beyond the Mecca gate. At the first sight of the city, a great shout of thanksgiving went up, in which Mohammed Beg and old Abdullah joined. As the ship approached the harbor through the circling coral reefs, the pilgrims collected their baggage and made ready to land. Soon they would be ashore, on the sacred land of Arabia, the cradle of Islam.

With impatience over the delay, Mohammed Beg and Abdullah passed through the medical and customs formalities, paid their head tax, and started on the last fifty miles to Mecca itself. Since the journey was not great, and could easily be accomplished in four days, they decided to do it on foot in company with some of the other pilgrims, leaving the luxury of travel by camel to others. On the third day, at Zu-Tuwa, they halted and performed the required bath, and as they drew nearer to Mecca they added to their chants this one, which moved them deeply and fully prepared their hearts for entrance into the Holy City:

O Allah, this is thy sanctuary, and the place of security;  
Preserve my flesh and blood from hell-fire.

When they finally arrived in Mecca, Mohammed Beg and Abdullah felt something of the same thrill



and sense of religious awe that comes to the Christian visitor to the city of Jerusalem and the Holy Land. They recalled that here in this very city the feet of their beloved prophet Mohammed had trod. When but a young man he had denounced idolatry from the precincts of the Kaaba, the inner sanctuary of the mosque, and had preached his fiery sermons calling people to repent of their sins and follow the worship of the one true god, Allah. From Mecca he had been compelled to fly for safety with his faithful followers, and to this city he later returned in triumph. With his own hands he had forever banished the idols from the Kaaba, and established his authority over the scattered tribes of Arabia.

"How thrilling to be here with fifty thousand Moslem brothers from all over the world!" mused Mohammed Beg. As he thought about how closely all Islam is bound together, the troubled thoughts of the weeks before vanished. He was now quite sure that the religion of the Prophet was capable of taking care of itself, and that all these changes he had been seeing and hearing about were but slight disturbances that would eventually pass away.

Dressed in the usual pilgrim garb and jostling among the milling throngs of brother Moslems from Java, Malaya, Egypt, the Sudan, Iran, India, and even China, they joined in all the rites and ceremonies of the ancient pilgrimage with a glorious ecstasy. Here they felt natural and at home. It was the first time they had known such peace of mind since leav-

ing Kashgar. Here the people were, to the last man, Moslems. No atrocious Western notions could ever undermine the faith of the true believers in this holy place. An unbeliever would never be knowingly admitted to the sacred bounds of the Kaaba. For him to enter would mean death.

On the day appointed for the final ceremonies Mohammed Beg and Abdullah, along with the other pilgrims, performed the necessary ablutions, carefully bathing and purifying their bodies according to the requirements of the Law. Then they entered the sacred mosque, and kissed the famous Black Stone which is set in one of the walls of the Kaaba. This was followed by their running around the shrine seven times—three times rapidly and four times slowly, which is said to be in imitation of the motions of the planets. Then they offered a special prayer, "O Allah, Lord of the Ancient House, free my neck from hell-fire, and preserve me from every evil deed; make me contented with the daily food thou givest me, and bless me in all thou hast granted." Next they proceeded to the "place of Abraham" and offered another prayer. Then they drank water from the sacred well of Zemzem, and again kissed the Black Stone. From here they joined the other pilgrims on the visit to the hills Safa and Marwa and ran from one to the other according to the custom. Then going a few miles beyond Mecca, they visited Mina and later went on to Arafat, where they listened to a sermon. On their return they stopped again at Mina and stoned the three



pillars of masonry there with seven small pebbles each. This is because they are said to represent the devil. Finally, while in Mina, they purchased a sheep—at an outrageous price—which they sacrificed as a climax of the pilgrimage.

Through it all Mohammed Beg was filled with a continuous exaltation at being on holy ground. His mind was absorbed with thoughts of the wonderful character and spirit of the Prophet, who had overcome such great opposition and had established the true faith of Allah on the earth. He had one further desire: to go on from Mecca to Medina, a distance of some two hundred and ten miles, and to pay a visit to the tomb of the holy Prophet. He felt that this visit would bring still further blessing, and add strength to his spirit. Thus they went on their way to Medina, and Mohammed Beg felt that in a measure this was the very peak of their pilgrimage experience. He talked with others and found that they felt the same way. There by the side of the tomb of the apostle of Allah they felt that somehow they were in the very living presence of their prophet. For them he seemed to live again; or rather, it was as if his spirit was a living presence inside the tomb. Here they dedicated themselves anew, and pledged their loyalty to Islam. It was the high moment of his life, Mohammed Beg thought, and poor old Abdullah was so overcome with the holy thoughts that filled his breast that he wept freely and unashamed.

And yet even before they had left Mecca and Me-

dina for the return journey Mohammed Beg had been deeply disturbed by another and totally different experience. Ever since they had been in Arabia they had found that the prices charged pilgrims were abnormally high. Little had these two simple people from Central Asia realized that the pilgrimage is the time for the people of Mecca to reap a harvest. Being honest people themselves, these devout visitors expected honest dealings from others. But they were overcharged for lodgings, and for every morsel of food which they ate. They were disgusted with much that they saw, and on one occasion they barely escaped being robbed of all they possessed.

Because of the way in which they had been treated Mohammed Beg and his grandfather were really glad to be on their way home again. But in spite of this unfortunate experience they had the satisfaction of knowing that they had done their duty. They had fulfilled the commandment of the Law. How proudly they answered when they were addressed as "Haji." After all, there was something glorious about walking "in the way of Allah."

Still there was a question in the mind of Mohammed Beg. Could it be that Islam was in danger of being destroyed by foes within as well as without? Were the forces working in Turkey and India to modernize Islam after all any more dangerous to the faith than the unscrupulous characters and lives of many of the so-called Moslems of Mecca? The only answer seemed to be that to the faithful all these



things are but signs of the times—signs that the Last Day is not far off, when the whole world will be converted to Islam.

“This,” said Mohammed Beg to his grandfather, “must be the explanation of these strange things we have seen and heard and experienced. Surely our prophet was divinely guided, and we cannot go astray if we follow his guidance, come what may.”

“Regardless of what others may do,” replied the old man, “we shall keep our feet steadily in the way of Allah. For verily, ‘there is no God but Allah, and Mohammed is his apostle.’ Yes, Mohammed is his apostle!”

The thrill of the visit to Mecca and Medina lasts a long, long time in the heart of the pilgrim. Back in his native Kashgar after his arduous journey, Mohammed Beg is a respected *haji*, although so young. He loves to tell his experiences to the other young men he meets, and he does it with a glow that comes from a kind of holy enthusiasm. To help keep the memories alive he has brought back with him some treasures which he guards carefully and shows with pride to his friends. He has a few of the small pebbles that he picked up at Mina similar to those he threw at the masonry pillar. He has a bottle of holy water from the famous well, Zemzem, in Mecca. But most precious of all is a small quantity of earth—sacred earth—from near the tomb of Mohammed in Medina. It seems to him the most prized thing in his posses-

sion, for it was in Medina at the Prophet's tomb that he felt an experience of great inspiration.

He cannot forget that experience. Now that he is back in Central Asia, it seems to Mohammed Beg that the Prophet is more wonderful than ever. How could anyone help but believe he was God's apostle, he asked his friends, after one had seen the multitudes from so many countries who gather at Mecca for the pilgrimage? If Mohammed's message had not been true, then how could one account for the fact that today two hundred and fifty million people from Morocco to the Philippines are followers of the Prophet? What more convincing proof of the greatness and divine calling of Mohammed could be found than this enormous number of the faithful in many lands? To Mohammed Beg, the Arabian prophet was the explanation of Islam's greatness.



## CHAPTER TWO

### THE LAST OF THE PROPHETS

**W**HO was this prophet to whose law Mohammed Beg and millions of his fellow Moslems across Europe, Asia and Africa give such intense loyalty? Here we must turn back the pages of history for a picture of this remarkable founder of Islam, one of the world's greatest religions. He alone is the key to the understanding of the Moslem view of life.

Thirteen centuries ago a new religion burst upon the world. Like the other great religions, it had its origin in one of the countries of Asia.

Sitting in his palace one day about A.D. 630, the emperor of the ancient Christian kingdom of Ethiopia was handed a letter from one Mohammed of Medina, Arabia. The writer informed His Ethiopian Majesty that God had called him, Mohammed, to be his messenger or apostle. He declared that he had a special commission from God as the last of the prophets to warn all nations of the impending doom which would overtake them, if all men everywhere did not turn to Allah for forgiveness and submit to his will. He therefore felt it his duty to invite His Majesty to accept the religion of Islam with all his people. So says Moslem traditional history.

Similar letters were received by the kings and rulers of various countries from Persia to Egypt. Great was the curiosity in the courts and palaces of the countries surrounding Arabia. "Who is this Mohammed?" "What is this religion of Islam that he invites us to accept, implying something serious will happen if we do not?" They did not have to wait long for the answer. For this new religion was soon to spread far beyond the bounds of the Arabian desert, and to extend the influence of this "last of the prophets" to three continents, from North Africa and Spain to China.

#### ARABIA IN MOHAMMED'S TIME

But we are going too fast. In order to understand the rise of Islam it is necessary to picture to ourselves something of the political, social and religious condition of Arabia some six hundred years after the time of Christ. In the first place, there was no national government. The Arabs of the desert, or Bedouins, belonged to various tribes and raised sheep and camels. They had no settled abode, and lived in tents, which on the approach of an enemy they could quickly fold up for a silent departure. As is true even today, very few of the Arabs of that time lived in cities. Only a very small proportion of the population lived in the few cities and settled towns in the oases or on the coast; and of these cities Mecca was the largest. The tribes, which were ruled by chiefs known as sheikhs, were very jealous of their individual independence.



To make matters more complicated from a political point of view, it must be remembered that both the Roman and Persian empires had "spheres of influence" in the country, and there were settlements of Jews and Christians as well.

The people were chiefly shepherds and traders. Long camel caravans bearing valuable merchandise to and from the surrounding countries of Syria, Mesopotamia, and Egypt were constantly on the move. By sea Arabs on the south and east coasts had for centuries been carrying on a thriving business in silks and spices with the western coast of India.

Mecca, the chief city of the Arabian peninsula, was primarily a settlement of a tribe called the Koreish. The Koreish were held in very special regard, because to them was entrusted the care of the temple or sanctuary, known as the Kaaba, which in spite of their differences was revered alike by all Arab tribes, and to which they made annual pilgrimages. Although there was no unity in the country—since no one ruler was recognized and the tribes were more or less constantly at war with each other—Mecca was the center of a certain amount of religious unity which centered around the Kaaba.

The religion of the Arabs at this time was a form of polytheism. They followed various debasing and immoral customs. Furthermore, the Arabs up to this time had no sacred scriptures; nor had they a national religious prophet. But at the same time it seems they were fully aware of their common racial origin with

the Jews, for they also claimed Abraham as their ancestor, since they traced their descent through Ishmael.

While polytheism and the worship of idols were the common religious heritage of the scattered Arab tribes, there were other influences at work as well. The presence of Christians and Jews living in the trade centers among the Arabs was making itself felt, as was also the contact with the ancient Christian cities by the traders who passed over the caravan routes to Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch and Damascus. In fact some Arabs had actually embraced Christianity. One of these was a cousin of Khadijah, Mohammed's first wife, and from him the future prophet probably learned about the Jewish and Christian scriptures. Arabia was coming more and more under the influence of the outside world. Silently but surely the stage was being set for the birth of a new religion—a religion that would shake the world and change the course of history.

#### EARLY LIFE OF MOHAMMED

Amid such circumstances as these Mohammed was born in the city of Mecca in the year A.D. 570 following the death of his father Abdullah. When he was only six years old his mother also died, and the orphaned boy was brought up by his grandfather, an old man almost one hundred years old, and an uncle, Abu Talib. His family belonged to the tribe of the Koreish which, as has already been said, was held



in high esteem because it was entrusted with the traditional guardianship of the sacred Kaaba. During his boyhood he spent much time with the Bedouins, and was engaged in herding sheep and goats. As he grew older Mohammed frequently went on journeys with caravans of merchandise to Syria, and on such journeys he met many Jews and Christians, from whom he learned a great deal about religion that was to be of use to him later on. And so the time passed until he was about twenty-five years of age.

Now it happened that one of the leading residents of Mecca was a charming and wealthy widow by the name of Khadijah. Because she was in need of an agent to manage her business enterprises, she became interested in the reports concerning the young man Mohammed, whose reputation for trustworthiness had earned him the name Amin, The Faithful One. This lady secured the services of Mohammed, and put him in charge of some of her trading expeditions. He took over the management of a large caravan, and handled the business with such success that his employer, Khadijah, fell in love with him and married him, though she was at least fifteen years older than he. As a result of this marriage Mohammed at once attained a position of wealth and influence in the city of Mecca.

It was during the first fifteen years following his marriage that his religious and political views began to take shape. He was frequently associated with a group of men who were greatly disturbed over the

political and religious situation among their people. Some of these men had given up the common practice of idolatry; they asserted their belief in one God, whom they called Allah; and they called themselves Hanifs, a name which some derive from a word meaning "to incline"—that is, their inclination was to search for truth among the maze of popular superstitions. They said they wanted to re-establish the religion of Abraham, the original ancestor of the Arabs. Not only was the religious condition of the country in need of reform, but the political condition was well-nigh hopeless as well. Torn with internal strife among the warring tribes, it was continually at the mercy of the encroachments and imperialistic ambitions of the Roman and Persian empires. The time was ripe for a thoroughgoing revolution, and there is no doubt that during those fifteen years Mohammed caught the vision of the need of a political-religious leader for his people—a vision which he was in the fullness of time to apply to himself, and to develop into a comprehensive system providing for government under religious control.

#### MOHAMMED'S REVELATIONS FROM ALLAH

About the year A.D. 610, when Mohammed was forty years of age, something very unusual happened. One of the Hanifs, Zaid by name, was living as a hermit in a cave in the side of the mountain called Mount Hira, near the city. He had been forced into this retirement because he had greatly angered the



people of Mecca by his violent protests against their worship of the idols in the Kaaba. Mohammed used to visit Zaid the Hanif in his lonely cave, and finally he was convinced that he too should abandon idolatrous practices. On one occasion, while deeply engrossed in meditation on the side of this lonely mountain in the cave of old Zaid, he had a singular experience. He seemed to be aware of a heavenly presence. The angel Gabriel appeared to him and commanded him as follows:

Recite, thou, in the name of thy Lord who created;—  
Created man from clots of blood.

This was the beginning of the Koran, the sacred book of the Moslems, although he did not know it then.

This experience was very vivid, but also very confusing. It was followed by a series of others of similar nature, and Mohammed was greatly disturbed by them. Could it be that they were revelations from God himself? Was God calling Mohammed to be a prophet? But he was not sure that they were real revelations from God at all. They seemed so much like the usual Arab poetry, in the form of rhyming prose, that there were some besides himself who were inclined to the view that he was no prophet, but just an ordinary Arab poet. Now the Arabs held all poetry was due to the inspiration of a jinni—a sort of evil spirit—and was very far removed from divine revelation indeed. However, the peculiar nature of the revelations, which seemed to come direct from God him-

self, and for which Mohammed felt in no way personally responsible, and the fact that they came at times when he was in a trance or fit, and that he appeared to be only a medium for receiving and delivering the messages and not the author of them, all seemed to reassure him and his wife Khadijah that he had really received a divine revelation.

Now completely certain of his revelations, he began to proclaim his divine message, first of all to the members of his immediate family and to his close friends. Following his wife, Khadijah, his cousin Ali, then Zaid, a former slave, and Abu Bakr, a close and influential friend, became his followers. They were undoubtedly impressed by his sincerity and humility.

#### MOHAMMED'S EARLY PREACHING

In due course his career as a public preacher began. The period of mild persuasive methods was past, when he had declared that "there must be no compulsion in religion." His messages from heaven, which later on formed the basis of the Koran, became more forceful and aggressive. He met not only with great opposition, but also with fierce persecution from the idolaters of Mecca. They told him he was a lunatic, and possessed with evil spirits. They called him an impostor, and made fun of him publicly. But all to no purpose. Little by little the band of believers grew; and, on the occasion of the annual pilgrimages to Mecca, Mohammed was able to preach his new doctrines of the unity of God to the thousands of pilgrims



who flocked to the sacred city from all parts of Arabia. In this way his followers began to form small groups in different parts of the country.

The strongest of these groups appears to have been in the city of Medina. Since the persecution of Mohammed and his followers had become very bitter in Mecca, their home city, some people of Medina invited the Prophet and his converts to come and make their home in more friendly surroundings. The people of Mecca, the guardians of the sacred Kaaba, were specially aroused against Mohammed because he was the bitter enemy of idolatry. In this he was attacking their special privilege, by which they thrived and made a living from the pilgrims. Thus it will be seen that, while the objections of the people of Mecca were ostensibly religious, they were actually economic. They were far more afraid of losing their income from the pilgrim trade than they were of going to Mohammed's fiery hell because they would not throw away their idols and submit to belief in one God.

X The Moslem era officially begins with the year A.D. 622, when with a little band of persecuted followers Mohammed fled from Mecca to Medina. This event, known as the Hegira (the Flight), is of great importance in Moslem history and in fact in world history, for it marks the beginning of Mohammed's rise to power and the turning point in his mission. Before this in Mecca he had been only a preacher. In Medina he was to become a king, ruling over his people, and dreaming dreams of world conquest.

During the twelve years of his ministry in Mecca, from A.D. 610-622, there are certain characteristics of his life and work which stand out as different from the years in Medina. At the beginning of his mission he undoubtedly had a genuine religious experience, which moved him profoundly and changed him from a polytheist and idolater into a vigorous preacher of the truth that God is one. His was a vital message of salvation. He saved himself and he wanted others to be saved. He spoke with passion and persuasion. The messages or sermons—all divine revelations—which he delivered in the Meccan period were mostly short discourses. They form today the shorter chapters or suras of the Koran. He insisted that they were not his own words, but that every word he spoke came from God as dictated to him by the angel Gabriel.

Since the message was not his own, but God's, he therefore came to his people in the rôle of a prophet and apostle sent from God. He declared that the religion he was preaching was not new at all. It was as old as Adam, and the original religion of mankind. Its name was Islam, which means submission to God's will and law. Not only was Adam a Moslem—a follower of Islam—but so also were Abraham, Moses, David and Jesus. He announced that he, Mohammed, was the last of the prophets or apostles that God would send upon the earth. Likewise the Koran—the messages from God which he was delivering—was the last and best of all the revealed scriptures sent down to mankind. Those who accepted the teaching, "There



is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is the apostle of Allah," would be saved and would share in the spiritual and sensuous delights of paradise; while those who disbelieved would be tormented in the fires of hell in everlasting punishment. The people were warned to seek forgiveness from God the merciful and compassionate, and to flee from the day of judgment which was surely coming. It was a message of great urgency, and we have no reason to doubt that at this stage Mohammed was genuinely sincere.

During this Meccan period, too, he remained the faithful husband of one wife. Khadijah was not only a real homemaker but likewise a great strength and help to him in his public life. She was a powerfully steadying influence. The death of Khadijah, as well as his move to Medina, brought two new factors into the life of Mohammed. In the one case his private life took on a new aspect. Released from the wholesome control of Khadijah, he married ten other lawful wives, of whom the ten year old child-wife, Ayesha, was his favorite. His family life with its many wives became extremely complicated; and his own example became an important factor in determining the future ethical and social standards of life in Islam. Second, his public life entered a new phase and he began to feel his political power.

#### MOHAMMED AS PROPHET-KING

In Medina, Mohammed became the ruler of a large group of followers. He had hoped to secure the

support of the large company of Jews who lived there, but finding them unwilling to yield to his designs he punished them with severe slaughter. From Medina, too, he won some successful engagements against his Meccan opponents, gradually increased his power, and consolidated his position. Mohammed was only a prophet in Mecca; but in Medina he became a prophet-king.

And as prophet-king his message also changes. The revelations are longer, less spiritual in tone, more filled with legal directions for the control of his growing community. There are fewer impassioned sermons, and a growing indication that he is called of God to political as well as to religious leadership of the Arabian people, for the purpose of welding them into one nation.

As the head of the nation Mohammed felt divinely led to bring all the Arabian tribes under his rule. Having already discovered the power of the sword to make himself secure in Medina, he set out to wage war with his armies of the "church militant." Finally in the year A.D. 629 he entered the holy city of Mecca in triumph, and from that date became the virtual master of the whole of Arabia. He entered the sacred precincts of the Kaaba and destroyed all its idols, with the exception of the famous Black Stone, which is still an object of veneration to Moslems. Islam had triumphed, Mohammed was supreme.

After securing control of Mecca, Mohammed retired again to Medina. He busied himself in building



up his community, leading it in worship, preaching to the assembled multitudes, and settling their private and public disputes. He was concerned, also, about the spread of Islam. His was no mere national religion. Islam was a faith for all mankind. Other peoples must be brought in as well as the Arabians. Thus it came about that the prophet-king of Arabia sent out letters to the rulers of the surrounding nations urging them to accept Islam, and declare their belief in Mohammed as the last of the prophets sent by the one true and all-wise Allah. Whether he was himself prepared to follow up the rejected invitations with military campaigns in order to extend the power and influence of Islam we shall never know, for he died in the year A.D. 632 in the arms of his beloved Ayesha.

#### THE SPREAD OF ISLAM

Following the death of Mohammed two matters of great importance had to be settled. One was the question of his successor. The other was the policy of expansion. As a prophet, the work of Mohammed was finished. In this respect he could have no successor. But Mohammed had been, also, the head of the large community of Moslems throughout Arabia. He had been their ruler. This place could and must be filled. After considerable difficulty and political maneuvering among the various parties that were already apparent, Mohammed's friend, Abu Bakr, was elected his successor or caliph, as he came to be known.

The problem of the caliphate being settled, the

stage was all set for the spread of this amazing religious-political movement, which had had its origin in the Arabian desert. This expansion proceeded vigorously north, east and west. In quick succession blows were struck which sent empires reeling. The fate of the Eastern Roman Empire was decided at the battle of the river Yarmuk near the Sea of Galilee in the year A.D. 634. Damascus, a stronghold of Christianity, was taken the following year. The Persian Empire and Egypt were the next to capitulate, while the conquest of Spain and India was begun in the same year, A.D. 711. Twelve years later the Moslem armies, having swept across North Africa from Egypt to the Straits of Gibraltar, destroying the great Christian civilizations in their path, pushed on into France. In A.D. 732 the famous Charles Martel at the battle of Tours forever turned the tide of Moslem conquest from Western Europe, although seven hundred years were to pass before the hosts of Islam were finally expelled from Spain.

Balked in Europe, Islam continued its eastward conquests. Sweeping over the whole of Asia Minor, Central Asia, India, and even into China, the Moslem power was triumphant. The Moslems demanded subjection and tribute from followers of Christianity and Judaism, since these were religions of a sacred Book. They offered others a choice of Islam or the sword. Many became Moslems for economic and social reasons. Islam was spread also by the quiet influence of Moslem traders, and the pious and zealous efforts of



Moslem missionaries. But the early centuries of Moslem power were marked by the use of military force in the form of the *jihad*, or holy war, for the spread of the Moslem rule and religion.

“THE GREATEST OF THE PROPHETS”

As Islam has spread across Africa and Asia it has proudly maintained Mohammed's claim that he was the last of the prophets, with a revelation that supersedes all others. Titles of honor and glory—two hundred and one of them in the Arabic list—have been heaped upon him. He has been called the Light of God, the Peace of the World, the Glory of the Ages, and the First of all Creatures. He alone will successfully intercede for his people on the day of judgment. His abode is the highest heaven, and he excels Jesus in honor and position by several degrees. While no Moslem ever prays to Mohammed, every Moslem prays for him, and in fact his name is never spoken or written without a prayer for God's blessing and peace to rest upon him. As Dr. Samuel M. Zwemer, one of the great Christian authorities on Islam, so well puts it:

“*Ya Muhammad*” [“O Mohammed”] is the open-sesame to every door of difficulty—temporal or spiritual. One hears that name in the bazaar and in the street, in the mosque and from the minaret. Sailors sing it while hoisting their sails; *hamals* [porters] groan it, to raise a burden; the beggar howls it, to obtain alms; it is the Bedouin's cry in attacking a caravan; it hushes babes to sleep, as a cradle-

song; it is the pillow of the sick, and the last word of the dying; it is written on the doorposts and in their hearts as well as, since eternity, on the throne of God; it is to the devout Moslem the name above every name.<sup>1</sup>

In short, to the Moslem the character of Mohammed may be summed up as being the very epitome of purity and truth.

This is the traditional Mohammed of the Moslem, to whom he is not only the last of the prophets, but the greatest.

In bringing this chapter to a close we may well note the changes that have taken place in the attitude of young Moslems of today toward the Prophet.

In the first place, he is not the Mohammed of the historical lives, which were written by Moslems themselves. An interesting process of thought has been going on through which Mohammed is given a character that no doubt reflects on the part of those describing it an intimate knowledge of Jesus Christ. This idealized conception of the Prophet of Islam presents him as the perfect man, a model for all mankind to follow. He is represented as sinless, for no prophet can commit sin, a view which reinterprets Mohammed's own requests, as found in the Koran, for forgiveness of sins.

He is also referred to as a great moral and social reformer, as tender-hearted, abolishing the horrible atrocities of war, as gentle and merciful even to his

<sup>1</sup> *Islam, a Challenge to Faith*, by Samuel M. Zwemer, p. 47. New York, Student Volunteer Movement, 1907.



greatest foes. He is presented as combining the highest of human attributes: justice and mercy.

In fact in these interpretations Mohammed is not only like Jesus in every manly quality, but is superior to him. Jesus had a triumphal entry; so did Mohammed when he entered the holy city of Mecca in triumph over his enemies. Jesus forgave his enemies; so did Mohammed forgive his persecutors in Mecca—all but four, who were put to death. Mohammed was more practical than Jesus. He performed no miracles, and offered the Koran as sufficient proof of his claims. He gave practical laws for his followers instead of visionary principles. Even his many marriages but demonstrate the perfection of his nature which enabled him to live successfully with several wives at the same time. Mohammed fully understood human nature, and accommodated his teaching to its frailties. And, finally, Mohammed came to complete the work which Jesus started but did not bring to full accomplishment. Moslems hold that Jesus was sent as a prophet only to the Jews, while Mohammed came with a mission to the whole world.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE PERFECT RELIGION

**I**N three summer conferences of American young people, not long ago, the question was asked, "If you were not a Christian, what would you prefer to be?" The large majority of the class in each of the three conferences voted for Islam first, with Confucianism a close second.

Most young people are aware that Islam is a religion that stands for only one God, and that it is opposed to idolatry. In fact, they may have heard that Islam is actually very similar to Christianity in many respects; that the Koran contains many of the Old Testament stories of the prophets, and that Jesus himself is accorded a high place in the estimation of Moslems. In other words, Islam would appeal to such young people because, from what they know of it, it seems to be more like Christianity than any other religion.

If you ask the Moslem, he will tell you that it is not a matter of debate, and not an open question at all whether Islam is better than the other religions of mankind. Islam, he assures you, is the one perfect religion today in the world. The Moslem believes this because the Koran says so. In one of its verses he finds



that Allah says to Mohammed: "This day have we perfected for you your religion." The faithful consider that the end of the matter.

The faith must be taken as it is: believed in, and acted upon. For this reason Islam has had little use for critics and reformers. For the most part it has been content to go along with the minimum of change from the traditional way. Therefore, most Moslem reformers have been considered the enemies of Islam. Some of them have had to face persecution, and even death. But all of them have taken the position that, since the people of their day had fallen into serious errors, they were merely trying to bring them back to the purer and more original form of the true Islam.

In Arabia, Mohammed ibn Abdul Wahhab in the eighteenth century sought to abolish the worship of saints and the use of tobacco, claiming both were contrary to the teaching of the Prophet. He was violently opposed, but he and his followers, who have come to be known as Wahhabis, finally won out on the basis that theirs was the purer form of this "perfect religion."

Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan of India in the nineteenth century was confronted with the problem of leading his people out of their deplorably backward condition. It was clear to him that Islam would have to be modernized, the medieval classical Arabic courses would have to be given up, and Western education introduced or the Moslems of India would be left far behind in the struggle for existence. This dis-

tinguished man was branded as a heretic and infidel and suffered severe persecution. But he took his stand on the position that he was only following the teaching of Mohammed, who said, "One should seek knowledge even unto China."

Sir Sayyid and his enthusiastic associates ultimately gained their point. He is now regarded in India as having been one of the greatest champions of the faith, and the magnificent modern Moslem university at Aligarh is a splendid memorial to his efforts. But these and many other examples of reform have succeeded because they were frankly within the system. They did not attack Islam. They rather sought to bring the expression of it up to date, and into line with modern tendencies. The original system itself was considered perfect. Even today when the current of modernism is running stronger than ever before in India, Egypt, and Turkey, the same argument holds, and all changes and modifications of the manners and customs of the Moslem people are based on the assumption that Islam is elastic, and adaptable to the demands of each age.

#### WHY THE "PERFECT RELIGION"?

One may well ask on what grounds Moslems base the claim that theirs is the perfect religion. One reason has already been noted: the authority of the Koran. Since the Koran has stated that Islam is the perfect religion that is the end of the matter, for the Koran is the very word of God. This no Moslem dares



to doubt. But there are other reasons which are perfectly obvious to devout followers of the Prophet:

*Islam is a revealed religion.* It is not man-made. Man had nothing to do with it, not even Mohammed. It is God-made. Mohammed was merely his instrument, and a passive instrument at that. He spoke what God told him to say; and at all times he did only what God told him to do. Therefore, not only in the Koran, but in the Traditions, which treat of what Mohammed said and did, have we the foundations of this religion which came from God in its entirety.

*It is the final and last revelation.* Since Mohammed is the last of the prophets, this revelation is the very last word in religion. There can never be anything to supersede it, and it supersedes everything else that preceded it. It is the final expression of God's will and wisdom for mankind.

*Of all religions it is held to be the one best adapted to man's nature,* the one most in accord with his desires and instincts. It meets man on his own natural level. It avoids high and impractical ideals, and brings religion down within easy reach, makes it a matter of simple observance of rules. As one young Moslem once said, "The ideals of Christianity are all very well, but they are too high to be practical. Therefore, why not combine Christianity and Islam, and let one be the ideal and the other the practical expression of religion?"

What then, specifically, is the character of this religion that has such extremely high claims made for

it? We shall consider it under two heads: what the Moslem believes, and how the Moslem worships. The remainder of this chapter we shall devote to the first of these points.

#### THE CREED OF ISLAM

Islam apparently has so much in common with Christian beliefs that it has been called a Christian heresy, or even a form of Christianity. But, as will appear, it really has little in common with Christianity. Nevertheless, they have just enough in common to make the study of Islam a very interesting pursuit. For instance, Moslems believe in one God; they hold Jesus Christ in great respect; they know the stories of many of the Old Testament characters like Abraham, Moses, and Joseph; they recite a creed somewhat like the Apostles' Creed; they recite a prayer that is similar to our Lord's Prayer; and they practise congregational worship.

In fact the longer or traditional Moslem creed or statement of faith (called *iman* in Arabic) in its form is very much like the Apostles' Creed:

I believe:

That there is no god but Allah;

I believe:

In his angels;

In his books;

In his apostles, and that Mohammed is the last of them;

In the Last Day; and

In the predestination by Allah of good and evil.



But the difference between the two systems of belief is very apparent. The heart of the Christian faith is ignored—the cross and all that it means of sacrifice for others. The kernel has been extracted; only the shell is left. But without further comment let us look at the separate articles of the Islamic creed.

#### THE MOSLEM'S ARTICLES OF FAITH

1. *"I believe that there is no God but Allah."* We read in the Koran, "God is one"—the very echo, as it were, of the words of Moses, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord thy God is one God." This emphasis on the unity of God is asserted in countless ways in the daily life of the Moslem: for example, in the simple creed, or *kalima*, which must be repeated at every time of worship, "There is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is the apostle of Allah," and in the extension of the forefinger of the right hand in one of the postures of prayer. Islam bitterly opposes polytheism, and during the early centuries of expansion the Moslem invaders were ruthless in their destruction of temples and idols throughout the length and breadth of the East.

The Moslem's idea of the character of God, however, is quite different from that of the Christian. In Islam God's will is arbitrary, his power is infinite and his authority is absolute. He creates all that exists and he wills and does everything that happens in the universe. In the Koran Allah is frequently described as kind and loving, as merciful and compas-

sionate, but his will is arbitrary and determines everything apart from intrinsic moral and spiritual values. To be sure, one will find some modern Moslems with Western education who would seriously object to this last statement, but it is nevertheless the commonly accepted view in Islam, and in Moslem countries one very frequently meets the tradition that when Allah had prepared the clay for the creation of mankind he separated it into two parts, saying as he did so, "This portion for hell and I care not; and this portion for heaven and I care not."

God's will is supreme. Man must believe in him or suffer eternal punishment in the final judgment. So far as Islam is concerned mankind has nothing more to anticipate, for the final revelation from God has been delivered. "He leaves to stray whom he wills and whom he wills he guides aright." One very common view of God is that we can know nothing at all about him, for "he is the high, the mighty." This rhyme is frequently heard in Cairo:

No thought that comes into your mind  
Has permanence of any kind;  
Nor can you say—I tell you flat—  
That God is this or God is that.

Nevertheless, one of the great realities to the Moslem is the fact of God: a God of mighty power, from whom we came and to whom we return when death summons us.

2. "*I believe in his angels.*" To Moslems these are not meaningless words, for they hold that there are



three kinds of creatures who belong to a different order from man, and yet are like him in some respects. These are angels, jinn, and devils. They are a species of spiritual creatures who have very direct relations with man, and touch him at many points in his daily life.

So it is that when a Moslem declares his belief in angels, as real beings, he means it literally.<sup>1</sup> He believes that there are unnumbered angelic hosts who were created from light. They have the power of speech, and are rational beings. There are four angels who rank highest among the messengers of God, and two recording angels for each single living individual. One sits on the right shoulder and records one's good deeds; the other sits on the left shoulder and records his evil deeds. At the close of the prayers which all Moslems must recite five times daily the worshiper turns his head to the right and then to the left in formal salutation of these angels. There are also two terrible black angels with blue eyes who meet men in the grave after burial, and ask them if they are Moslems. Should the reply be in the negative severe punishment is meted out to them then and there. There are guardian angels for man who take care of him in times of danger. Eight angels are mentioned who support God's throne, and the fires of hell are said to be in charge of nineteen.

Jinn, the genii of *The Arabian Nights*, are a sort of

<sup>1</sup> Something similar to this belief is vividly portrayed in "Green Pastures" when one sees the idea of angels that the uneducated Negro of the deep South holds.

intermediate species between men and angels. There are both good and bad jinn, and they are created from fire. They assume various shapes, grow large and small at will, attack unsuspecting human beings, and are the cause of unending fear in the hearts of multitudes of Moslems who believe in their power over men. The average Moslem in Arabia, India, Iran or North Africa is amply prepared to verify the old tales of the jinn with chapters out of his own experience.

In Calcutta an old Moslem servant threw up his job of pulling the fan, or *punkah*, which was worked by hand before the days of electricity. The reason he gave was that on the previous night a jinni had hit him a terrible blow on the back of his head, and he would stay there no longer. The truth was that as he was sitting with his back against a brick pillar he fell asleep, and the person for whom he was pulling the *punkah* awoke in a great perspiration, for the night was terribly hot. Since this was not the first time the old man had stopped pulling, his master rose from his bed, took a bottle of smelling salts and, quietly stealing up behind the pillar, held it under the old man's nose. At the first whiff the old man threw his head back quickly and of course hit it against the pillar. But being entirely unaware of the real cause of all that happened, he believed to his dying day that he had been the victim of some jinni.

Jinn are said to inhabit wells, bath houses, abandoned dwellings and certain secluded regions. The Koran tells of how the jinn were interested auditors



of Mohammed's preaching, and that a company of them was converted to Islam. One modernist Moslem, Sheikh Mohammed Abduh, of revered memory, was inclined to the view that the germs which cause disease are really jinn!

Satan, called Iblis or the Shaitan, is the prince of all the shaitans or devils. He lost his standing as one of the righteous angels when he refused to obey God's command to bow down and worship Adam. So God cast him and his hosts out of paradise, and ever since Iblis and his shaitans have been the enemies of God and man. One must be continually on guard against them. The Traditions and the Koran are filled with instructions to the faithful on how to protect and preserve themselves from their evil power. In the morning, for instance, one should carefully cleanse the nose three times by snuffing water, because a devil takes up his abode in the nose during the night. Charms are worn by countless numbers of Moslems to ward off evil, and to bring prosperity and success.

3. "*I believe in his books.*" We have already seen how the Koran originated, and how Mohammed believed that he had been chosen by Allah to receive the final expression of God's guidance for mankind. The Koran cancels all former revelations and supersedes them. It is revelation perfected. It is the climax of God's messages to man.

According to the Moslem belief, God sent down to earth a hundred and four sacred books. Of these Adam was given ten books; Seth, fifty; Enoch received

thirty; and ten were given to Abraham. None of these, however, is now in existence. The four books of divine revelation that are still to be found are the Law of Moses, or the first five books of the Bible; the Psalms of David; the Gospel of Jesus; and the Koran, which was revealed to Mohammed. Although the three other books are highly spoken of in the Koran, Moslems hold that the Koran alone of all the revelations now exists in the pure and uncorrupted form in which it was originally revealed. The Law of Moses, the Psalms of David, and the Gospel of Jesus are believed to exist now only in a corrupted form.

And now we must take a closer look at the Koran itself. It is held in the highest reverence, and is believed to have been written by Allah on the "preserved tablet" in heaven, where the original has existed from all eternity. Moslems hold that it is uncreated and eternal, the very speech of God. It is even regarded as the one great miracle with which God honored Mohammed, and hence it is the standing proof of this prophetship. It is an unusual book, and the rhyming prose of its Arabic is full of a mysterious charm for those who recite it in their daily worship, or read it in private or in public. In size it is a little smaller than the New Testament, though it contains one hundred and fourteen chapters. But it has no order, or sequence of thought, or systematic arrangement; and scholars have spent years of effort trying to work out a chronological order of its contents.

Its subjects cover a wide range of human interest.



There are stories of the prophets and apostles from Adam to Moses, and from David and Solomon to Jesus; it contains laws for the regulation of family life, and for the ordering of personal, tribal, and national affairs; it abounds in sermons, exhortations to good works, warnings for evildoers, and vivid descriptions of the sensual delights of heaven and the fearful torments of hell. In places the sublimity of its thought and language reminds one of the impassioned utterances of the ancient Hebrew prophets. The following are excellent illustrations:

#### The Light Verse

God is the Light of the Heavens and of the Earth.  
His light is like a niche in which is a lamp—  
The lamp encased in glass—  
The glass, as it were, a glistening star.  
From a blessed tree is it lighted,  
The olive neither of the East nor of the West,  
Whose oil would well-nigh shine out,  
Even though fire touched it not!  
It is light upon light.  
God guideth whom he will to his light,  
And God setteth forth parables to men,  
For God knoweth all things.<sup>1</sup>

—Sura XXIV

#### The Fatiha (Opening Chapter)

Praise be to God, Lord of the worlds!  
The compassionate, the merciful!  
King on the day of reckoning!

<sup>1</sup> From J. M. Rodwell's translation of the Koran, pp. 46-47. New York, E. P. Dutton & Co., 1909.

Thee only do we worship, and to thee do we cry for help.  
 Guide thou us on the straight path,  
 The path of those to whom thou hast been gracious; with  
 whom thou art not angry, and who go not astray.<sup>1</sup>

—Sura I

The first of these examples may be likened to one of the psalms, and the second is not unlike our Lord's Prayer, and is used by Moslems in much the same way.

Moslems regard the Koran as the central truth for the world. It is not Mohammed but the Koran that is the revelation of God's will; not a personality but a book. Being of divine origin it is not subject to ordinary literary and historical criticism, and the means by which it was revealed is not open to investigation. Even the best-educated Moslems who have been trained in the latest scientific knowledge of Western universities dare not seriously advance any modern opinions about the origin of the Koran, or call in question the method of its production. This doctrine of revelation is the cornerstone of faith on which Islam is founded; and one may well say that if this is lost, then all is lost. The question is, How long can such a belief withstand the advance of knowledge and the ultimate demands of truth?

In addition to the Koran, the Moslems regard the genuine Traditions concerning Mohammed as being second only in divine authority to the Koran itself. They are considered of immense importance because

<sup>1</sup> From J. M. Rodwell's translation of the Koran, p. 28.



of the belief that Mohammed was divinely guided in all that he said and all that he did. Everything that the Prophet said in his table talk or at other times in ordinary conversation, everything he did or did not do, has been collected in the form of thousands and tens of thousands of traditions, sifted, edited and finally preserved in six accepted collections.

The following specimen traditions will give an idea of this class of inspired writing that is held in such high regard by Moslems as a basis for faith, and as a rule for life:

The Apostle of God said, "When a dead person is placed in the grave, then two black angels with blue eyes come to him one of whom is called Munkar and the other Nakir. . . ."

Ayesha was once asked what the Apostle of God did the first thing when he entered his house. She replied: "He began to use a twig for cleaning his teeth."

The Apostle of God said: "He who builds a mosque for God, God will build a house for him in paradise."

"Verily, God does not accept the prayer of a man clothed in long trousers."

It is not the Koran alone but the traditions as well which give the true understanding of Islamic faith and practice.

4. "*I believe in his apostles.*" Islam distinguishes between prophets and apostles and puts the latter in a higher class than the former. It is said that there have been one hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets, and only three hundred and fifteen apostles,

and of these six are placed in the highest category. These six are Adam, the chosen of God; Noah, the preacher of God; Abraham, the friend of God; Moses, the spokesman of God; Jesus, the word of God; and Mohammed, the apostle of God.

These prophets and apostles are in the sacred succession of those who have been honored and chosen by God to communicate his guidance to mankind down the centuries. Mohammed is the last and the best of them. He will never have a successor, and it is firmly believed that ultimately the whole world will accept Islam.

5. "*I believe in the Last Day.*" The fifth article of belief in the Moslem creed has to do with the happenings of what is called the Last Day. It is also known as the Day of Resurrection, or Separation, or Reckoning, when the good and bad deeds of men will be reckoned up as a bookkeeper reckons his accounts. Most dreadful will be the terrors of that day and hour. There will be a literal resurrection of the physical bodies, and so the afterlife, Moslems believe, will be one either of everlasting physical pleasures or of physical punishments. Many modern Moslems today would treat the descriptions of heaven and hell as found in the Koran and Traditions as allegorical, and give to them spiritual meanings. But by the standard orthodox writers and ordinary believers these descriptions are accepted literally as set forth.

Paradise or heaven as described in the Koran is like a huge banqueting hall, or lovely "gardens of



delight . . . with goblets and ewers and a cup of flowing wine; their brows ache not from it, nor fails the sense; . . . theirs shall be the houris . . . ever virgins.”<sup>1</sup> The greatest spiritual pleasure in heaven is the sight of the face of God. But the ideal virtues are not glorified in the Koran in vivid and concrete imagery.

The torments of hell are portrayed in lurid language. There are seven gates, and each gate is strongly guarded. Its terrifically hot fires burn with fuel consisting of sinners and stones. Its inhabitants are given nothing to drink but liquid pus, and their garments are burning pitch.

Men will know when the Day of Judgment is approaching because the sun will rise in the west; there will be a terrific world war between the opposing hosts of Gog and Magog; the Antichrist will come, and Jesus as a leader of the Moslems will descend from heaven, alighting first on the minaret of the ancient mosque at Damascus. The Mahdi,<sup>2</sup> too, will come, and will eventually lead Islam to universal victory.

6. *“I believe in the predestination by Allah of good and evil.”* This is the last article of the Islamic creed, and in it we find the key to much of the course that history and human life have taken in Moslem lands. While it is impossible to prove from Koranic

<sup>1</sup> From J. M. Rodwell's translation of the Koran, pp. 66-67.

<sup>2</sup> Literally, the Directed One; a ruler who will appear upon the earth in the last days. See Chapter Eight, p. 151.

texts that Islam is exclusively fatalistic, denying free will to man, yet in practice, as well as in the teaching of most of the Moslem sects, man's destiny is regarded as entirely in the hands of God. To such an extent is this fatalistic view of life held that it colors and affects life at every point. The individual not only ceases but refuses to accept responsibility for his actions and their consequences. If he misses a train, it was not his fault—the train left before he got there. It was God's will, why worry? If he fails to pass his examination, it was written in his destiny that he should fail, and that is the end of the matter. If a Moslem promises to do a certain thing, he will always protect himself with the reservation, "If God wills," and so leave open a back door of escape from fulfilling an inconvenient promise. Since God wills both the good and the evil that happen in the world, man never knows whether he will have success or not. In Islam blessed is the man who expects mercy for it is a sin to despair of God's goodness.

Still, overemphasis on the certainty of fate cuts the nerve of endeavor, and allows men to settle back into the ruts of custom and fall into ways that lead to degeneration and decay. It is not too much to say that this view of life has been a millstone of despair around the neck of Moslem society and peoples everywhere. This one article of belief in itself is sufficient ultimately to work the complete destruction of any people that lives by it. Unless Islam can sufficiently reconstruct its practical philosophy of life so that a



new and different principle of action can be offered to man, one that inspires him and challenges him to better effort, it is difficult to see how its followers can avoid being left far behind in the march of time.

The efforts being made today in certain Moslem countries, such as Turkey, Iran, and Iraq, to make progress along the lines of Western civilization have come about largely because their leaders have abandoned the fatalistic view of life as found in Islam, and have struck out on new paths. In Turkey, national progress is undoubtedly the guiding ideal and motive for the leadership of President Kamal Atatürk. Islam as a religion appears to be of interest to the present régime at Angora only in so far as it furthers the purposes of nationalism. After all that has happened in Russia, and even in Turkey itself, it is not impossible to imagine that the Turkish rulers might even yet bow Islam completely off the stage should it appear to stand in the way of national development.

#### THE SECTS OF ISLAM

The simple faith and practice as originally transmitted to the Moslem people by the Prophet Mohammed in the form of Islam, "the perfect religion," later lost its unity and simplicity with the development of different sects. If sectarianism is a hindrance and a weakness to Christianity, it is equally so for Islam. The Prophet is credited with having said that his people would be ultimately divided into seventy-

three sects, only one of which would be orthodox—and be saved!

In general, Moslems may be roughly classified as belonging to two main sects, the Sunnites and the Shiites. The first sect is by far the largest, and it is the sect that adheres most closely to the path which Mohammed followed. The Sunnites predominate in most Moslem lands, and it is they who hold the belief that the caliph is the visible successor of Mohammed. The Shiites are comparatively few in number. They are found chiefly in Iran, where they predominate, in Iraq and in India. The Shiites do not accept the doctrine of the caliph as the leader of the Moslems, and they have a theory of divine leadership of the Moslem people—and especially of their own sect—by an *imam*, a belief which has led to many bitter and bloody wars between the two communities.

Of more recent origin are two other groups: the Wahhabis, who as we have seen earlier in this chapter conducted a campaign of reform in the eighteenth century, and who are today a powerful force in Arabia; and the Ahmadiyahs, followers of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad of India, who just before the beginning of the present century organized a great revival movement for the purpose of spreading Islam to all the countries of the world. The Ahmadiyah movement is active today, and carries on missionary propaganda in many lands.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Ahmadiyah movement is described more fully in Chapter Eight.



## THE DERVISH ORDERS

There has grown up alongside ritualistic worship in Islam a belief in a more direct and mystic approach to God. The belief is that God can best be known through the experience of religious ecstasy and emotion. Those who become most practised and experienced in this sort of knowledge of God are known as *pirs*, or guides, and it is their business to guide their disciples into similar emotional experiences of God. These *pirs* and their disciples are organized into dervish orders or brotherhoods throughout the Moslem world. They are very similar to the religious orders or brotherhoods in the Roman Catholic church, such as the Dominicans and Franciscans. The word dervish literally means one who goes from door to door. It signifies also that the member of the order is one who is poor in this world's goods.

Occasionally the *pir* makes a tour to visit his disciples and to make new ones. When he comes to a city he is literally besieged by his followers, who garland him with flowers, vie with each other for an opportunity to kiss his hand, and seek his blessing. During the course of such a visit the *pir* will conduct a *zikr*, or special prayer meeting, for those who have been initiated into the order. The *pir* will sit on the floor in the middle of a circle of his disciples, and lead them in swaying movements of the body as they recite in unison: "*La ilaha illa-llah*," "There is no god but Allah." As they proceed in the meeting, which may last for hours, they are supposed to enter into a won-

derful experience of ecstasy and nearness to God. Many of them fall down in utter exhaustion.

The *pir*, too, is expected to be able to work miracles for his followers. Some are noted for being able to work cures for snakebite, for healing all sorts of diseases, and for removing the curse of sterility from childless women. One of the functions of the *pir* is to supply charms for his people. These charms usually consist of verses from the Koran written on small pieces of paper which are folded and placed in a small case of silver or gold and worn around the neck or the arm of the person to ward off evil. They are placed on children to protect them from the effects of the evil eye, curses, disease, and accidents of all sorts. Conversely they are worn to bring good luck, safety during journeys, and success in examinations or in business. In Egypt and Syria drivers of automobiles will ordinarily not venture out without hanging a string of blue beads over the front of the radiator to protect them from accident.

Many localities are associated with the protection of some particular saint. In the Vale of Kashmir, for example, the patron saint of the Jhelum River valley is one Abdul Qadir Jilani, whose tomb is in Baghdad. The Kashmiris call him Pir Dastgir (The Helpful *Pir*). His help is continually sought, especially by the Moslem boatmen of the valley. The following verses, written by the author during a vacation in Kashmir, will perhaps show how the common people look to the *pir* for help in their everyday life.



On the waters of the Jhelum,  
With their voices ringing clear,  
Call the boatmen, as they labor,  
On their Pir Dastgir.

It is he who helps them onward  
From the leafy Bagh Chenar,  
Through the Dal-gate and the channels  
To the smiling Shalimar;

While up the winding river  
Shining like a silver thread  
On the bosom of the landscape,  
With the blue sky overhead;

Or beneath the templed summit  
Of the Throne of Solomon,  
You can hear them calling, calling,  
Be it late at night, or dawn.

For the guardian of the valley  
Is the famous Pir Dastgir;  
And without his aid no boatman  
Ventures forth in fair Kashmir.

#### BAHAISM

An offshoot from Islam that has established itself in Western countries and that may well be considered here briefly is Bahaism. The name is taken from its founder, Mirza Husain Ali, entitled *Baha'ullah* (The Splendor of God), who claimed to be a manifestation of Deity.

Orthodox Islam has been bitterly hostile to it. It claims to include and supersede all other religions, and is highly eclectic in character. It includes many humanitarian prin-

ciples, largely assimilated into its teachings after contact with the West. As met with on its native heath of Iran, its principle of *taqiya*, or concealment of one's religious faith as a method of escaping persecution, is characteristic. It carries on an active propaganda abroad and makes extraordinary and unsubstantiated claims of successes.<sup>1</sup>

The whole question of the finality of religion is raised by this chapter on the "perfect religion." We see now why Moslems describe their religion in these terms of perfection and finality. Islam is a religion of external divine authority. It rests its entire claim to truth and perfection on its accepted theory of revelation. If this theory is valid, and if the Koran was revealed in the manner asserted by Moslems, then of course that settles the matter, and we should all be very foolish not to become followers of Mohammed. If it is not valid, then the claim for perfection and finality falls to the ground.

In a sense Moslems themselves have perceived this difficulty, and have sought to base their practical religious life on two other elements vital to real religion: one of these is a personal example of the ideal way of life, and the other is a personal and direct experience of God possible to the believer. For the first they have idealized the life and character of Mohammed; and for the second they have introduced and popularized the teachings and practices of mysticism. The highest aim of the Moslem is to imitate him in

<sup>1</sup> *Mecca and Beyond*, by Edward M. Dodd and Rose Wilson Dodd, p. 146. Boston, Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions and Missionary Education Movement, 1937.



whom the one true religion was perfected, and to come into direct and personal contact with God through the exercises of the mystics.

In the last analysis, however, the real test of finality in any religion is whether it is actually able to meet the growing demands of life. If it can always keep ahead of man with its ideals, its principles, and its basic conceptions of life and the universe in which we live, then in truth it may be regarded as final. But if life should outgrow and go beyond the principles and ideals of any religion, then, of course, it will in time be classed among the antiquities—interesting but no longer useful. Islam must submit to this test. The question is, Can Islam meet such a test? The Moslem says it can.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE STRAIGHT PATH

**A**LLAHU AKBAR! God is most great! God is most great! God is most great! God is most great!" Thus sang out the muezzin from the top of the high minaret of the great mosque in Damascus as he gave the Moslem call to prayer in a high falsetto voice. It happened to be Friday. I was standing with some friends in a beautiful little garden by the tomb of Saladin. I remembered those fierce and worse than useless struggles of the Crusades when this famous Saracenic warrior led his Moslem troops against the Christian forces of Richard the Lion-hearted—all of which reminded us that the Crusades were great pagantry, but poor Christianity.

And then this beautifully weird call to prayer suddenly broke in upon our meditations, with its four times repeated "*Allahu akbar!*" We all stood at attention to hear it to the end. The day was the Moslem Sabbath, and it was a thrilling sight to see multitudes hurrying to the mosque in response to that call. It was as though the forces of Mohammed the Prophet were being mobilized again for action, so ready was the response as the faithful listened to the muezzin with his melodious voice sing out in stately Arabic, "God



is most great! God is most great! God is most great! God is most great! I bear witness that there is no god but Allah! I bear witness that there is no god but Allah! I testify that Mohammed is the apostle of Allah! Come to prayer! Come to prayer! Come to prosperity! Come to prosperity! God is most great! God is most great! There is no god but Allah!"

Five times a day in every land the muezzins call the faithful to prayer. From China to Afghanistan, and from Borneo to Egypt, this is the cry that mobilizes millions of the followers of the Arabian prophet for the worship of God, who bids them come to him and submissively walk in the straight path.

In the opening chapter of the Koran Mohammed prays that God will guide him and his people in the straight path—"the path of those to whom thou hast been gracious; with whom thou art not angry, and who go not astray." Mohammed does not make the claim that he is the way but rather prays that he may be guided as well as his people. However, it is essentially true that Mohammed has become the way for Moslems, and their highest ideal is to be able to follow the path that he trod.

Let us now examine this straight path, for it, too, is a part of the Moslem conception of the perfect religion. A Moslem must not only believe correctly, he must act correctly as well. Islam is supremely a religion of correct religious practice. It tells its followers exactly what they must do. Its rules are innumerable and meticulous, and theoretically govern, control and

regulate the whole of human life. The straight path reaches everywhere through the realms of religious, personal, social, economic, national and international affairs. However, in this chapter we shall deal only with that which has to do with the personal religious life of the Moslem—how he worships.

#### THE RITUAL OF ISLAM

“A Moslem,” Mohammed is reported to have said, “is one who is resigned and obedient to God’s will.” Five duties clearly mark out the straight path for the Moslem.

1. He bears witness that there is no god but Allah.
2. He continues steadfast in prayer.
3. He fasts in the month of Ramadan.
4. He gives the required alms.
5. He performs the pilgrimage to Mecca, if he has the means.

These duties are also called the pillars of religion. While they were laid down by Mohammed in a general way, the working out of the details was left to later generations and masters of the art of religious etiquette. Their source is, of course, the Koran and the Traditions, and the obligation to perform them is unquestioned.

One of the things that impresses a Westerner visiting Moslem lands is the serious manner in which the average man takes his religion. As we followed Mohammed Beg and Abdullah on their journey across India we found that it is no uncommon thing to see



some of the passengers get up, spread their prayer rugs down on the floor of the coach, take their stand as nearly as possible facing in the direction of Mecca, and proceed to go through the prayer ritual. We found, too, that when the train stops at a station just after sundown one can see a number of men using the brief space of time at their disposal to go through the prayer ceremony on the platform. Or another picture: A laborer in the fields has heard the far-away call to prayer coming from the mosque in his village. He stops his work, throws down his rude hoe, places a cloth on the ground for a prayer rug, and there in the twilight after the sun has set, facing Mecca, he bows in worship before God, the mighty and wise, the merciful, the compassionate.

This feeling that God is always with one is a very powerful factor in Islam. It is one of its outstanding values. The Moslem is conscious of his spiritual need and his dependence on Allah. Allah is his master, his king. The Moslem is his submissive subject and bond-servant. This being the case, true religion consists in being loyally obedient to God's commands, and strictly carrying out his orders. It is essential, therefore, that for the outward expression of his religion man should be provided with specific instructions, which it shall be righteousness to carry out, and sin to disobey. It follows, then, that the observance of religious obligations is the most important thing in Islam. Men must be able to see the good works of a religious man—and verily he has his reward. He is

conscious of having done his duty, and people who have seen him at prayer praise him for being a faithful servant of Allah.

#### THE FIVE DUTIES OF A MOSLEM

1. *Witnessing for Allah.* The Moslem creed is the shortest in the world, and its very brevity is one secret of the enormous influence it has over the world of Islam. "*La ilaha illa-llahu, Muhammadu rasulu allahi,*" "There is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is the apostle of Allah," are the magic words that bind the Moslem peoples into one. They are whispered into the ear of infants at birth, and are the last words of consolation given to the dying. From western China to the heart of Africa the Moslem trader has won converts to the faith by his impressive recital of this tabloid version of the message of the Prophet.

It is required of a convert that he make his confession of this creed in a mosque if possible. He must repeat it aloud in Arabic words, whether he knows that language or not; he must understand the meaning and accept it in his heart; he must be firm in his belief in this creed till death; he must always recite it correctly; and finally, it must always be repeated without hesitation.

2. *Prayer.* Ritual prayer in Islam consists in the strict observance of a very definite set of acts performed at stated times in a particular manner. With this attitude toward and understanding of prayer it is not strange that Moslems regard Protestant Chris-



tians as irreverent and irreligious because of the casual and informal manner in which they engage in prayer. It is hard for them to understand that the Christian emphasis is upon the inward and spiritual value and meaning of prayer, rather than on the outward concrete forms and physical postures. To the Moslem, however, these outward forms are important, and give essential validity to his prayers. They are a part of the straight path which will ultimately lead him to the gate of heaven. To some the Moslem prayer recited in Arabic five times a day may seem but vain repetition; but to the faithful it is the staff of life, the key to paradise.

Prayer to be acceptable to God must come up to certain standards or requirements, and these must be strictly observed. These are the right direction in which to face (the qibla), legal purification, the correct times, correct postures, and recitation in Arabic.

The *qibla*, or right direction to face. Moslems all over the world are required to face the holy shrine of Islam, the Kaaba at Mecca, when they pray. No Moslem would even think of beginning his prayer without being reasonably sure of his directions. Travelers by sea or land have often asked the writer to indicate where the sun rises, so that from that information they might get their bearings. Sometimes a compass is carried to enable one to make sure that he is right; the author has seen a small compass carried as a watch charm for this purpose. At one time Mohammed had designated Jerusalem as the *qibla*;

but later on this revelation was canceled by another which fixed Mecca for all time as the correct center. Some liberal Moslems may be found who will tell you that after all direction in prayer does not matter, and that the Koran says both the East and the West belong to God. Nevertheless it is extremely doubtful if they would ever be found in practice neglecting this specific instruction of the Prophet with regard to prayer. The observance of direction is universal in Islamic prayer. No mosque in the world from the Philippines to London is built without being so arranged that the worshipers will face Mecca.

Purification. This is one of the most intricate and important requirements for valid prayer. Volumes have been written for the sole purpose of explaining the methods, occasions, and purposes of the use of water for ceremonial purification, and how, under certain circumstances when water is not obtainable, clean sand may be used in its place. It is difficult for us to understand and appreciate the lengths to which Islam has gone in this matter of purification. To us it may seem puerile in the extreme. To them it is a very serious affair. This all grows out of the insistent demand which Islam makes for the specific and concrete.

Many editions of the Koran bear the following notice to all who handle this sacred book, "Let none touch it but the purified." This has no reference to the pure in heart, but to those who have removed all traces of impurity from their bodies, who have, as it were, made clean "the outside of the cup." This is



the purification that the Moslem law requires for prayer. One shall have properly cleaned the teeth, cleaned and trimmed the nails of hands and feet, and taken a bath. The feet, hands, ears and face shall have been washed in precisely the right manner. Even the mouth and the nose shall be carefully cleansed to make sure that Satan has taken his departure from hidden recesses. For prayer the head must be covered, to prevent evil spirits from entering the skull; and the shoes must be removed, for they are unclean. All this and vastly more minute directions are given for the benefit of those who are exceedingly particular about avoiding even the appearance of evil.

Times for prayer. The true Moslem, faithful and devoted bondservant of Allah, would sooner miss his meals, be late at work, or lose a train than fail to pray at the appointed times. In every Moslem country one can hear before dawn all through the year the sonorous call of the muezzin from some mosque rousing the faithful for their morning watch with the words: "God is most great! . . . Come to prayer! . . . Prayer is better than sleep." This is the first prayer service of the day, and while a worshiper may observe it at home, or anywhere else, it is always better to observe prayer in a mosque. And many there are who go. This is followed by four other stated times of prayer, making five in all. These are just after noon, two hours before sunset, just after sunset, and finally two hours after sunset.

Correct postures. The idea that a person can offer

prayer in any position is unthinkable to the Moslem. To him posture of the body is part of the prayer, as is purification of the body. There are six definite postures assumed by the Moslem when engaged in the regular prayers, which must be used in the proper order whether one is praying alone or in a congregation of thousands. Each posture has a definite significance. The full prostration with the forehead on the ground indicates complete submission to God.

Prayer in Arabic. The Moslems say that Arabic is "the language of the angels." At any rate it is the sacred language of Islam, and prayer to be valid must be recited in it, for these Moslem prayers we have been discussing are not voluntary prayers, but required ritual prayers.

When the worshiper prays he says the following, each portion being accompanied by a definite posture:

1. "God is most great."

2. "I seek refuge from accursed Satan." He then recites the Fatiha, the opening chapter of the Koran, and one other short chapter as well, such as the last chapter which reads:

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful.  
 Say: I betake me for refuge to the Lord of men,  
 The King of men,  
 The God of men,  
 Against the mischief of the stealthily withdrawing whisperer (Satan),  
 Who whispereth in man's breast—  
 Against jinn and men.



3. "I extol the perfection of my Lord, the great! Our Lord, praise unto thee." This the worshiper says three times.

4. "God is most great." He then says three times, "I extol the perfection of my Lord most high."

5. "God is most great." He then repeats 4 and 5.

6. "Peace be upon you and the mercy of God." This is said as he turns his head to the right shoulder and again as he turns it to the left to salute the recording angels of good and evil in turn.

The devout follower of Islam repeats this same form of prayer seventy-five times a day during the five periods of prayer. In addition special prayer is required at the time of an eclipse of the sun or moon, and on the two great feast days which occur each year.

That prayer is a sincere reality to the Moslem, and not merely a form, there is not the slightest doubt. Generally speaking, he takes it seriously. No one must disturb him while he is thus engaged. At times while calling on a Moslem official the writer has literally had to sit for long periods waiting for him to finish his devotions. It is true that Turkey has abolished the fez, and introduced the European hat or cap with brim or vizor, and that an effort has been made to replace prayers in Arabic by prayers in Turkish; but the rest of the Moslem world shrug their shoulders and go on their traditional way, regretful that their Turkish brothers have strayed so far from the straight path, and all the more determined to remain therein themselves.

Moslems who have been brought under Christian influence sometimes show the keenest spiritual insight in regard to prayer. One Moslem girl some years ago in the Isabella Thoburn College in Lucknow had been deeply impressed by the addresses she had heard in a series of meetings held for the students. In her heart she had been won for Christ, but she felt she could not take the final step of accepting him for fear of her family. At the close of one of the meetings she arose and told her story, and asked that those present should pray for her, that she might be helped through this time of testing. She closed her remarks by asking the congregation to sing her favorite Christian hymn, "In the hour of trial, Jesus, plead for me." A very fitting hymn for such a troubled soul—and a striking confession for a Moslem to admit that she had a favorite Christian hymn! Given a chance the follower of Mohammed can appreciate the depth and reality of the spiritual meaning of prayer as well as anyone.

Yes  
But granted that the Moslem may be sincere in prayer as he understands it, the question still remains, Is he right, or has he missed the real point of communion with God and higher values which prayer has to offer? Has he perhaps set up a mechanical substitute for the real thing? And yet there are some things of real value that can be learned from the Moslem about prayer, if we are sufficiently humble and willing to learn. He is certainly to be commended for his belief in the value of prayer, for his belief that God



is his guide and that it is worth while to put God in his daily timetable.

3. *Fasting.* The month of Ramadan is the time for fasting in Moslem lands. This article of the faith corresponds in some sense to the month of Lent among Christians, but is observed in an entirely different way, and for an entirely different purpose. Observance of fasting during the month of Ramadan is for the purpose of obtaining merit. As one tradition says: “. . . The rewards of fasting are beyond bounds, for fasting is for God alone, and he will give its rewards.” The fast begins before sunrise, and ends at sunset. Not a morsel of food, nor a drop of water, nor a whiff of a pipe or cigarette may be taken during the day, no matter how great the heat, or how long the summer day in the tropics. It thus falls particularly hard on Moslems during the years when the lunar calendar brings Ramadan in the hot months.

The following quotation from *The Iran*, a Teheran newspaper, reflects the meaning of Ramadan there:

For Moslems the month of Ramadan is the month of prayer. There are a certain few people who have a special account with God, that is, in eleven months out of a year they do whatever they wish to do: drink wine, gamble, commit adultery, etc.; but when the month of Ramadan comes they put away all their bad acts and not only fast but pray as often as they find free time from their business.

Another group of Moslems pray all the year round, but more for the sake of trying to impress people that they are real Moslems. Every time they bow down their heads in

prayer they wish to obtain the trust of people of this world as well as of the other world.

Another group feel that they are forced to fast, but whenever they find a chance, they eat as much as they can.

Still another group of philosophers are found who say that man should serve other people rather than fast.

Then there is a last group, from whose hands may God protect us, who believe in nothing. Many are to be seen these days.

We really all misuse the fasting month. Those who fast and do not eat anything during the daytime, make up for it at night. They begin eating just after sunset and do not stop chewing until sunrise. The result of this is an upset stomach which sends them to physicians right after Ramadan and keeps them the regular visitors of the cruel doctors all the year.

The law of fasting is not applied to infants, idiots, the sick and the aged. It is considered an act of great merit to spend much time during the nights of Ramadan reading the Koran and the Traditions. It is believed that the Koran was revealed on one of the last ten nights of Ramadan, and for this reason the month is considered very sacred.

If fasting is to be of any real value for either spiritual or physical purposes, it would seem that it would have to be observed in some more rational manner. One cannot deny that there may be value in fasting if it is done with a deep spiritual purpose, and to achieve some worthy end. One can appreciate the lofty objective of Mahatma Gandhi when he fasted for twenty-one days in 1924, and risked his life in order to try to bring about better and more brotherly



relations between the Moslems and Hindus of India. But the fast of Ramadan, which is required in the name of religion, and in practice appears to be an end in itself, generally operates in such a manner as to be devoid of true spiritual power. It is thus, undoubtedly, that many Western-educated Moslems regard it, since they no longer strictly observe it.

4. *Tithes and alms.* A good Moslem must give regularly for the cause of religion. This is one of the pillars of Islamic faith that goes back directly to the example of the Prophet and the teaching of the Koran. Therefore the tithe in Islam is compulsory, as it was among the Jews. The tithing rate in Islam is much less than the Jewish one-tenth of the income, and is generally regarded as about one-fortieth of the total income. Where strict Islamic law and government prevail there are religious tax collectors who gather up these tithes; but generally speaking today the matter is left to the conscience of the individual, and especially is this true in countries where Moslems live under non-Moslem governments, such as India and North Africa.

In addition to the legal tithe which is required, it is no uncommon thing for Moslems to make additional offerings for charitable purposes. Islam encourages giving to the poor and homeless, and the expenditure of one's substance on hospitality. In fact it is a religious duty to be hospitable, and a Moslem is expected to entertain a guest for three days. After that length of time one may not expect hospitality to

be extended. This rule applies to the poor as well as to the rich, and throughout the Moslem countries one will find regular entertainment of guests the common practice. It even becomes a burden on the poor—but a burden cheerfully accepted.

5. *The pilgrimage to Mecca.* The center of the Islamic world is Mecca, and the center of Mecca is the Kaaba. It was a master stroke of Mohammed when he made the pilgrimage to Mecca one of the duties of religion. Undoubtedly it has been one of the strongest factors for creating a sense of brotherhood and unity among the diverse peoples of the Moslem world.

We find the pilgrimage idea all down through human history. Christians during the Middle Ages made the pilgrimage to Palestine. Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* are stories told by pilgrims to the tomb of Thomas à Becket. Today we Protestants have summer conferences and conventions instead!

The pilgrimage to Mecca attracts pilgrims from every corner of the Moslem world by the tens of thousands, as we saw in the first chapter. In 1929 the number was reported as 85,000, and in 1934 at least 60,000 arrived at Mecca for the opening day's exercises. They come from everywhere, by sea and by land. In 1934 no less than 25,000 came by sea to Jidda alone from Singapore, Cape Town, and various other ports north and south. Many also come by the overland routes, using the Hejaz railway from Damascus to Medina; or by motor omnibus from Baghdad across the desert; and special *haji* parties



have been known to make their way by bus even from Lahore, India, to the Holy City! The return of these pilgrims to their native villages and cities in Java, India, Central Asia, Iran, North Africa and elsewhere plays an important part in maintaining the Moslem morale and preserving the bonds of Islamic brotherhood throughout these countries.

The ceremonies center largely around the Kaaba in Mecca. This is a curious cube-shaped building in the center of the mosque. The top and outer walls are always covered by a specially made black cloth, which is adorned with a broad band embroidered in gold with inscriptions from the Koran. The Kaaba antedates Islam, and was formerly used by the idolatrous Meccans as their house of worship. Its most ancient treasure is the famous Black Stone, which is said to have once been white but to have been turned black by the kisses of the pilgrims! It was probably a meteorite, but is said by Moslems to have been sent from heaven.

Before returning home the pilgrim usually visits Mohammed's tomb at Medina, which adds additional strength to his faith and merit to his journey. In fact, the visit to Mohammed's tomb, which was recommended by him, according to the Traditions, has undoubtedly been taken by Moslems as a basis for extending the practice to include visits to the tombs of holy men everywhere. Consequently we find the Shiite sect visiting the tombs of their holy *imams* at Karbala and Najaf in Iraq, and at Meshed in Iran, and else-

where; while the tombs of Moslem saints are venerated and regularly visited throughout the length and breadth of the Moslem world. Only the puritanical Wahhabis, whose present leader is King Ibn Saoud of Mecca, prohibit this, and at one time they carried their fanatical opposition to such an extent that after the World War was over they attacked Medina and even damaged the tomb of the Prophet to remove from it evidences of reverence for Mohammed which they considered to be worship of him.

#### REWARDS AND PUNISHMENTS

Along with these five pillars of faith that we have been considering we must, before ending this study of the straight path, look at the closely related subject of Moslem ethics and the system of rewards and punishments under Islam.

Moslem ethics may be conceived as consisting of a definite moral code or set of rules for conduct known as the Law (*shariat*), which is based upon divine revelation as found in the Koran and the Traditions. Those who obey the law are rewarded, and the disobedient are punished, all according to a well defined scale of values. This conception of ethical standards, rewards and punishments may be sketched briefly as follows:

1. Obligatory acts: performance rewarded, omission punishable.
2. Recommended acts: rewarded if done, not punishable if omitted.



3. Permissible or allowed acts: do as you please; acts of this kind are neither punishable nor rewarded.

4. Disapproved acts: not punishable.

5. Forbidden acts: punishable; abstinence brings reward.

The ideas of sin that Moslems have are very definite. Sins are divided into two classes: great sins and little sins. The seven great sins are sometimes described as: idolatry, murder, false charge of adultery, wasting the estate of orphans, taking interest on money, desertion from holy war, and disobedience to parents. Sometimes the use of intoxicating liquors is included, as well as adultery. All small sins are easily forgiven. Sins are acts that God forbids, regardless of what one's own reason may have to say about the matter. It is as much a sin to pray without washing one's feet in the proper manner as to tell a lie. To the pious Moslem the ceremonial and the moral law are one and the same. A man who has broken the seventh commandment is considered no worse than one who has defiled himself by eating a piece of bacon. As one young Moslem put it who was offered wine to drink by an American host, "It would be as wrong for me to drink wine as to murder my mother."

Mohammed provides the standard for ideal character in Islam. No stream can rise higher than its source. To understand Moslem character and conditions in Moslem lands one must go back to Moham-

med, who by his life and teachings is responsible for what they are.

In the preceding chapter we considered the question of "the perfect religion," and discovered that perfection or finality in religion is not to be found in rules but in principles—principles that seem to grow out of the very nature of a holy and just God. We may call them universal principles, they are so fundamental. The Moslem holds to but one basic principle, God himself and his will expressed in concrete rules for the guidance of man. He is not interested in the abstract principles of love and justice; life to him cannot be regulated according to the ideal that "he that would be greatest among you should be the servant of all"; or "he that would save his life shall lose it." Such things are too indefinite. He requires specific rules for action. Do not worship idols; do not commit murder; do not steal. These instructions are very clear. To break these is sin.

By adopting the point of view that insists on a body of revealed rules for guidance, rather than principles, Islam has created certain serious problems that must be faced:

*Is the revealed law of Islam fixed for all time, or can it be changed and developed?* The authorities differ. Some hold that the principle of agreement is such that changes may be made provided the learned doctors of Islam agree to them. This is supported by the tradition that Mohammed said, "My people will never agree in an error." But whatever the theory, the fact



remains that changes which have come in Moslem law in the different countries have usually come in spite of the learned doctors of the law.

Turkey and Iran have been transformed by the substitution of French and Swiss codes of law for the law of Islam. In India, Moslems have been obliged to accept the English civil and penal codes, and retain Islamic law only for governing their personal affairs, such as marriage, divorce, and inheritance, and for religious practices. In that country the question has been seriously debated among the doctors of the Law as to whether Moslems could really follow their religion properly because of these changes which have been forced upon them. As recently as 1920 thousands of devout Moslems were persuaded to emigrate from India to Afghanistan and other strictly Moslem lands where they could follow their religion according to the divinely revealed requirements of the Prophet. In the eyes of the orthodox, Turkey, by treating Islamic law in the way she has done, has committed the unpardonable sin. Many conscientious young Moslems are genuinely puzzled about whether to consider Turkey a Moslem country today.

*Is there any place in the moral law for personal responsibility?* We have already discussed the question of man's free will in relation to God's mighty power. The matter now comes up in another form. What is the nature of sin in Islam? Does sin consist simply in the outward act of breaking a law; or is it an inward condition of the heart or nature of man?

The Koran does speak of the evil that men do, and the punishment which will be meted out to them. They are threatened with divine justice if they do not repent and turn from their evil ways; and they are promised rewards for doing good. Sin is specified there as consisting of disobedience to the commandments of God, of refusal to follow the teaching of the Prophet.

Many Moslems appear to ignore the inner significance of sin as a spiritual disease. The Koran, the Traditions and the Moslem creeds take a mild attitude toward sinners. Among the mystics rather than among the ordinary Moslems is found that sense of incompleteness that we call the sense of sin. The Moslem believes that God has endowed him with sufficient power in himself to keep divine laws. In experience he finds that this is true; the requirements are not too difficult. He feels no need for a power beyond himself to enable him to achieve a sense of righteousness according to the Law. He is conscious that he needs the mercy of God, but Mohammed will intercede for him and he needs no other savior. He obeys the law, and avoids doing those things which the law calls sin. This sounds simple and satisfying, but is it an adequate view of man's relation to God? Does it actually meet the realities of life?

Does the Moslem have the last word on this subject of sin and human responsibility? Is the task of walking in the straight path of life as easy as all that? If so, then no wonder Moslems are satisfied.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### HOME AND THE FAMILY

SIR, our Young Men's Moslem Association is to hold its regular weekly meeting next Sunday afternoon at two o'clock at my house, and we should be very pleased if you and your Memsahiba would come and be our guests."

"Delighted," I replied in response to this interesting and cordial invitation from Sayyid Ibrahim, a modern young Moslem of Aligarh, who held M.A. and LL.B. degrees from the university there, and who was having a struggle to get his practice of law started in a city where the legal profession was already overcrowded.

"We are to have a discussion," he went on to say, "which I think you will find very interesting. We are going to discuss the question of bringing our wives out of *purdah*, for most of us are married, and have had modern education, and some but not all of us feel the time has come to reform our family life in this respect. We shall be so glad if you will both come and help us by your presence. Many of us younger men are looking forward to the time when we shall be able to take our wives out freely with us as you Europeans do, and the presence of the Memsahiba

with you in our meeting will give encouragement to some of the timid members of our group."

#### CHALLENGING THE "PURDAH" SYSTEM

On the appointed day we took our way through the narrow streets of that Oriental city, whose houses with their high, blank, unwindowed walls facing the public roads were substantial brick and mortar witnesses to that blighting custom of secluding women that for centuries has prevailed through the world of Islam. Back of the custom, of course, lies the rationalizing idea that the modesty and protection of women require it. But through the course of centuries it has worked such havoc with the home and family life of the Moslems, and particularly with the women, by keeping them in a state of virtual imprisonment, that it is not surprising that the younger generation of both men and women are beginning to rebel and to seek for some respectable way of escape from the absurd requirements of a seventh century religious law, which now stands in the way of progress in these modern times. Little wonder that Sayyid Ibrahim, B.A., LL.B., and his young friends were making every effort to break through their orthodox Moslem society, or evade its conventions, so that they might establish their families in houses where the doors and windows would be open on all sides to admit the fresh air and the health-giving, purifying sunlight; where their wives and their children might know the joy of a normal mingling of the sexes in proper social gather-



ings; and where the girls would have the advantages of modern education just as their brothers do.

The house of Sayyid Ibrahim where the Sunday meeting of the Y.M.M.A. was to be held was an old-fashioned, Oriental building in the heart of the most ancient part of the city. It was thoroughly out of keeping with the modern dreams and aspirations of this group of young social and religious revolutionaries; nevertheless, it formed an interesting and appropriate setting for such a discussion as we were to hear, because of those very elements of contrast which it provided so strikingly. On our arrival I was escorted into a large room in the men's apartments, where some chairs were arranged for the meeting which was to take place, while the Memsahiba was led by our host into the women's apartments to meet his mother, his young wife, and his sisters. They could not appear before men who were not of their family, and as a stranger I was not permitted to enter their part of the house, nor was it considered proper on my part even to look in that direction.

Before the members arrived, Sayyid Ibrahim and I walked in the enclosed courtyard outside the large drawing room where the meeting of the Y.M.M.A. was to be held. Here he told me more about his family, while the Memsahiba visited in the *zenana*, or women's quarters. He reminded me that he belonged to one of the oldest and very best Moslem families of the city. His father and mother were both old, and of course were jealous of their good name as orthodox

followers of the Prophet. For the most part they strictly observed the Moslem religious and social laws, but his father in late years had adopted a more liberal attitude, and had even insisted that his youngest daughter, Ibrahim's sister, should go to the girls' middle school which had recently been opened by the city authorities. However, she had to go in a carefully curtained horse carriage, as *purdah* must be strictly maintained. Perhaps the father even might be willing to let Fatima come out of *purdah*, but her mother would not hear of it. For to go with one's face wholly uncovered was to proclaim to the city that one was a bold, bad girl, and she would never let people say that about her Fatima. What a disgrace it would be to the family! But it was something to have Fatima in school, and he was thankful that even this much of a step in advance had been taken by his family.

Furthermore, Sayyid Ibrahim pointed out that their family had taken a strong stand against polygamy. His father had had only one wife, and he was himself strongly determined never to take more than one. He said it was so much better for the family, and pointed to the many cases he knew of in the city among their acquaintances and even relatives, whose family difficulties were complicated by serious feelings of jealousy, and even by quarrels among the co-wives, because of the Islamic law which permits a man to take four wives.

"But," said Ibrahim, "these men forget that the Prophet very wisely attached an important condition



to this matrimonial permission, which says that a man may take four wives only on condition that he can treat them all alike. But who can do that? And so we modern Moslems think that the Prophet really meant that we should follow the rule of marrying but one wife. What is more," he went on to say, "our family has given up the practice of child marriage; my wife was seventeen when we were married, and I was twenty-three. Among the Moslems who have been influenced by modern views of life, the age of marriage is constantly rising."

"Is your wife an educated woman?" I ventured to inquire.

"Not so well educated as I could wish," he replied. "She has studied through the middle school, and knows a little English, but I wish she knew more than she does. However, if she were to come out of *purdah* so that she could meet with other educated women among the Christians, both Indians and Europeans, I think she would soon pick up a lot of useful information and complete her education in that way. Perhaps when I move to the new house out in the suburbs, which my father is building for me, then I can gradually bring my wife out of *purdah*. But as long as we live here with father and mother they will not listen to it.

"And we are very anxious to get into our new house, too," he added, "for another reason, and that is so that my wife will be able to live more in the open than she can here. These old-fashioned houses

are death-traps for women. They have to live inside there," pointing to the women's apartments, "with only a little sun in the veranda and in the courtyard. Often our women get tuberculosis from such seclusion. I had a sister who died from it, and my wife is not strong, and I fear greatly that if we continue to live here she may get it, too. It will mean everything for our future happiness when we can get off in a house by ourselves, for I am convinced," said Ibrahim, "that the only way to improve family life in the Moslem community is to do away with the *pardah* system."

At this point Sayyid Ibrahim led the way back into the large drawing room, with its curious mixture of Oriental and Western furnishings, where the members of the Y.M.M.A. had assembled. After introductions I chatted for a time with these interesting young men, while our host went into the women's apartments to call the Memsahiba to hear the discussion which had been promised us.

It was an unusual occasion for these young people as well as for their visitors. The young men had invited the Memsahiba to come in order that they might see how a woman out of *pardah* conducts herself, and they were losing no time in making every observation possible, while the Memsahiba was none too comfortable at being the center of attraction. The attention of the assembly, however, was soon drawn to the chairman, who opened the discussion of the day with a few appropriate remarks, and called on members to rise



and express their views freely on the subject, "Resolved, that the *purdah* system should be abolished."

Interestingly enough most of the thirty young men present indicated that they belonged to the reform party of Islam, and for all the various and obvious reasons that could be adduced they were in favor of this far-reaching innovation in Islam. They made it clear that as soon as they had it in their power to do so, and when they were free from the powerful restraints of their conservative families, they would surely bring their own wives out of *purdah*.

But there was a minority which opposed the proposition from deep conviction. They held that the law of Islam was sacrosanct. It was from God himself, and had been delivered to Moslems and the world by God's prophet, Mohammed. It was not for men to amend this divine law, and to do so would be to endanger the very foundations of their religion. The *purdah* system had been established in order to protect the chastity of women, and to safeguard the family. Remove it and Moslem family life would be ruined by the laxity and license which would creep in. After all, women did not need all this modern education. Their place was in the house, and there they should stay, and tend to their household duties of cooking and looking after the children.

There was no surer way of ruining the religion of Islam and wrecking Moslem society, the minority went on to say, than to give women the unlimited freedom that would come from abolishing *purdah*. If the

honorable opponents did not believe this, all they had to do was to visit the moving picture shows and see with their own eyes the unthinkable and highly improper things that were taking place among the women and men of the Western countries where there is the greatest freedom of the sexes. If they wanted this sort of social condition to grow up in Moslem lands, then they would surely see it when the *purdah* system was abolished. On the other hand they felt that the only way for society in so-called Western Christian countries to be redeemed was for Islam to be established there, and for the *purdah* system to be adopted!

These remarks from the minority produced much applause, as well as hearty laughter, while the meeting adjourned with the best of feeling, and with the resulting consciousness that it is in the family life of Moslem society that some of the most vital and fundamental problems arise. In fact in this house of Sayyid Ibrahim and in the discussion held there by those young men we have the setting and the statement of the most important issues of home life found in Moslem countries everywhere.

In the first place it should be noted that Islam does not know the word "home." They use "house" instead, and as there is a difference in the words, so is there a vast difference in the meaning attached to them. And yet the home and family life, such as they are, form the basis of the Moslem social life all the way through, except where reformers are trying to work a change. Segregation of the sexes and seclusion



of women are two of the cardinal principles of Moslem home and social life.

#### MARRIAGE IN ISLAM

Marriage is not one of the requirements laid down for a good Moslem, but it is a state that is highly recommended. All men and women are expected to get married. If a person is not married in due course, there must be something seriously wrong. But while men and women are expected to marry, they are not expected to fall in love, become engaged, ask the consent of the girl's parents, fix the date for the wedding, and then marry. It is not according to the law of Islam and the customs of our people, Moslems would say. No respectable young man or young woman would ever be permitted to do this. The parents of the boy and girl, usually through the agency of a third party, make the arrangement. The engagement is celebrated by an exchange of gifts. The young man is not supposed to see his wife-to-be until the day of their marriage, although she can see him from behind the veil which hides her from him. Love matches are not associated with respectable people where the law of the Prophet prevails.

In commenting on the changes in marriage customs that are taking place in Iran, Mrs. Herrick B. Young of Teheran, Iran, writes:

A Moslem is never married in a church or mosque. From the time that Iran was conquered by the Arabs and Islam imposed upon the people until very recently, the Moslem

priests have been the legal as well as the religious authorities. To perform the marriage ceremony was one of their exclusive rights. Today regulations have been so changed that recently two converts from Islam were married by a Christian clergyman in the mission chapel with a Christian ceremony. What a change from the old days, when often the bride was forced into the marriage knowing her husband to have other wives, or to be twice her age.

But let me describe the typical Moslem wedding of my good friend and former pupil in the Teheran Girls' School—Fatima Ahi. When we arrived we were ushered through a passageway into the courtyard.

I wish I might give you the feel of it all at once. Excitement, gayety, flowers, fountain, music, dancing, bowings, twitterings, smiles—and yet all with a dignity, a ceremoniousness, a suppressed noisiness that seems only to be achieved by the Oriental. In the center of the court is a lovely pool with a playing fountain, surrounded by flowers blooming in a dignified formal border. A row of chairs with a table in front of every second one is ranged primly around three walls of the garden, the ones at the back facing the veranda of the house. French doors open off this porch into a reception room. Although there are vacant chairs in the garden we are honored by being ushered into the drawing room or, as they call it, the guest room. The room is arranged in the same formal manner as the garden, chairs lining the walls, small tables in front of them. There is a mantel decked in bright silk and holding stiff bouquets. There is a center table covered with a beautifully embroidered red felt on which is a basket of flowers, cut and wired in the conventionally stiff Persian style. There is an empty chair just under the mantel which we feel with excitement is intended for the bride.

The bride's sister is leading us and we crowd by the seated dowagers to our places very near the chair. After



a time the bride's mother comes in to shake hands and welcome us. She must be everywhere on this important occasion just as the mother of an American bride always feels it her duty to be. She motions to a servant to bring us tinkling glasses of iced fruit juice. Before long, tea is served in glasses placed in exquisite silver holders. We help ourselves to the cakes, sweets and nuts from the table in front of us. Strains of music come to us from the group of players at the other end of the garden. Presently two dancers come up the pathway and into the crowded room to give an exhibition in what space there is left.

Suddenly we notice the bride's sister motioning us to come into another room. This is unusual and seems a bit mysterious since we are singled out from the whole roomful. We rather embarrassedly edge our way down the line of tables and are greeted in the next room by the mother, who says, "We thought perhaps you had never seen this part of the ceremony and would be interested. The other guests won't expect an invitation for often the vow takes place several days before the reception. Fatima is all ready and will be here in a moment. Afterwards we will take her to the guests to receive their congratulations." We murmur our thanks and sit waiting another half hour.

At one end of this room there is a high gilt-framed mirror resting on the floor. Then the bride arrives, dressed in white satin with flowing tulle veil crowned with artificial orange blossoms. She is accompanied by her sister and the costumer hired for the occasion to help her dress and to apply her make-up. They help her get down on her knees in front of the mirror, arranging the lovely wedding dress in such a way that she can sit back on her heels in the ordinary Persian fashion when on the floor. Soon a turbaned priest is ushered in, a colorful patriarch with his beard dyed with henna, flowing robe, and bright green sash (denoting his direct descent from the prophet Mohammed).

He kneels, taking the same position but several feet behind the bride, and chants several phrases from the Koran.

We wait breathless and expectant, for we are perhaps as eager to see the groom as is he to see his bride. Of course he has never seen her and she is not supposed to have seen him—though fleeting glimpses she has had. When he arrives he too kneels in front of the mirror, reaches for the hand of the bride and looks in the mirror at the shy and lovely creature, while the priest begins another chanted prayer, which fortunately for them lasts only a few moments. The ceremony is over and the groom withdraws to his own home where his male friends and relatives are being entertained in honor of the occasion; the bride is conducted to her chair under the mantelpiece and showered with rose-petals and tiny white sweets. There is more music and dancing. More tea and ices are served and the bride is the center of attention as the guests come to wish her well.<sup>1</sup>

While the marriage age for girls in Moslem lands is rising with the spread of education, yet there is still a vast amount of child marriage among girls. This is especially true of the Moslems of India. Wherever women doctors are to be found in the Moslem lands, they have many sad stories to tell of the tragedies in girl life that are found because of this practice of child marriage.

Another ancient Moslem institution that is being widely discussed and criticized today is polygamy. Moslem women are speaking out, and in their conferences in India, for example, are boldly denouncing

<sup>1</sup> Adapted from "An Iranian Wedding," in *Women and Missions*, December, 1936.



it. As a matter of fact, since Turkey has abolished polygamy, and sentiment is growing against it in other countries as well, the practice is becoming discredited in the countries where the rule of the Koran prevails, and the evidence goes to show that plural marriages are on the decrease among Moslems today. As Western education spreads in Moslem lands there is little doubt that the harem system will die out, that monogamy will tend to supplant polygamy, and that thus a gradual improvement in the home life will result.

#### DIVORCE

The divorce problem is a very real one in Islam, as it is in Christian lands. Just as man has the greater freedom in the matter of social life and in marriage, so he has had a larger freedom than woman in the matter of divorce. And divorce in Islam for the man has been a comparatively simple matter. One Moslem writer confesses with shame that in some quarters there is a tendency for men to divorce their wives as they would cast off their old clothes. They simply invoke the sanction of Islamic law, declare three times in the presence of the wife, "I divorce you," and that is the end of it. There is in such cases no legal inquiry; no proof of misconduct on the part of the woman is required. The man may do as he pleases. "Legally, he should give her a sum of money equal to one-third of her dowry, but frequently she is unable to get this. Her only recourse is to go back to her

relatives; sometimes she has none.”<sup>1</sup> However, in the case of the very wealthy Moslem, where the dowry has been a substantial sum, this legal stipulation often discourages quick-tempered husbands from divorcing their wives on the spur of the moment.

Under certain conditions a woman may divorce her husband, but this is done very rarely, and the general belief in Islam is that divorce is a one-way procedure. Present-day Turkey provides an exception in the matter of divorce, for here a European divorce code has been adopted.

#### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION OF CHILDREN

A way in which the devout Moslem home surpasses many a Christian home is in the matter of religious education. This is something in which devout Moslem parents take the greatest care. First of all there is the matter of the parent's own example. If the father and mother can read the Koran, it is one of their prime duties to set an example to the children. The prayers must be faithfully observed, and they must be said at the proper times at home by the mother, even if the father goes to the mosque for his.

When a boy is about six, he is placed in the care of a tutor, or sent to the nearest mosque school where the elementary rules for reading the Arabic Koran are taught. Little by little the lad advances in reading and memorizing sections of the Koran, until by the

<sup>1</sup> *What Is This Moslem World?*, by Charles R. Watson. New York, Friendship Press, 1937.



time he has reached twelve years of age he will have finished reading the holy Koran through for the first time, and have committed considerable portions of it to memory. In honor of the occasion of his having completed the first reading of the Koran the father will often give a party to a large number of friends, and a poem in celebration of the event will be read by one of the local poets.

At the same time the boy is being instructed by his father and tutor in the principles of Islamic faith, and in the essential religious duties. He is taught the meaning and value of ceremonial ablutions before prayer. Then he is shown just how to wash his feet and hands, and to go through the prayer ritual. Finally when he has reached the age of twelve or fourteen he will go with his father to the mosque, and there join with the other men in the prayers.

#### CELEBRATION OF HOLY DAYS

The celebration of the Moslem holy days is carefully observed in the home and this has a profound effect on the children. The Feast of Sacrifice is commemorated regularly each year in every devout Moslem home, when a sheep, or a goat, or a cow or even a camel is sacrificed. Special prayers are said, and it is a time of feasting. For this occasion, as well as for the feast which follows the month of fasting, the men dress in their best clothes and go to the special place of worship that is provided outside the city. Usually they take with them their children, who have

also been dressed in gay garments for the occasion. Greeting cards are sent out and received by the family on the occasion of these great religious festivals, and nowadays even highly decorated telegram forms are used for the same purpose. The houses are decorated just as is done in the West at Christmas, and the young people especially rejoice in the good times.

Another special day celebrates the birth of the Prophet, and children are encouraged to recite poems in his honor, and to attend public meetings where he is praised. Still another special occasion is the Night of Record, celebrated with fireworks, when it is believed that God records all the actions of men that will be performed during the coming year, and the names of those who are to be born and to die.

A ceremony which undoubtedly leaves a great and lasting impression on the minds of children is the celebration of Muharram, when the death of the first martyrs of Islam, Ali, Hasan and Husain, is solemnly commemorated with deep feeling. Especially is this the case among the Shiites. Their particular hero is the martyred Husain, who fell on the field of Karbala in what is now Iraq. With great emotion, poems in honor of Husain are recited, and many devotees will lash their bare backs with chains and even swords, until blood streams to the ground and they fall down exhausted. The elaborate and gaily colored representations of the tomb of the martyr are carried through the streets in a huge procession accompanied by thousands. The sight of such a large concourse of



people celebrating one of the great events of Islam fixes firmly in the hearts of the young people who observe it a deep reverence for those who have given their lives for the faith, and died fighting in the way of Allah.

#### AMUSEMENTS

What part, it may be asked, do amusements play in the family life of Moslems? How, when, and where do they seek their enjoyment? To begin with it may be said that Moslem children play games and enjoy them just as children do anywhere. They have their own varieties of games of tag, marbles, and cards. Where Western civilization has left its impress the Moslem youth in the schools and colleges of India, Iran, Syria, Turkey and Egypt go in for hockey, football, tennis, cricket, baseball, basketball and track with the greatest of zest. They may and do play card games, but gambling at cards or on horse races is forbidden to a good Moslem. Yet because of the influence of the West these temptations are daily becoming more difficult for the Moslems of the great cities to face.

The dance among orthodox Moslems is regarded as a very immoral practice. In Indian Moslem circles mixed dancing between the sexes is considered immodest, immoral and—well, simply unthinkable. In Turkey, Iran, Egypt and the more modern countries of the Moslem world the situation is quite different. With the unveiling of the women dancing has been

encouraged as a means of bringing the wives into mixed society.

Music and the drama come in a different category and much time is spent in listening to good singers or trained musicians. In these modern times the phonograph is extensively used for entertainment at home and in public, and the records reveal the talent of the best Moslem singers and orchestras. The more pious prefer the musical chant of selections from the Koran. Dramatic performances draw large crowds of both men and women, a special place screened off for the latter being provided in the theatres. And of course the Moslems go to the "movies" and "talkies." Too often the picture is one of Hollywood's worst, and the immoral and unwholesome effect produced is bad both as a debasing example and because of the impression the Moslem gains of the West.

But the crowning amusements are those found in connection with the religious feasts, at weddings and at celebrations of the birth of a son. It is then that young and old put on their best clothes and make merry with feasting and song. At the homes of the wealthy, hundreds are fed on such occasions; and if it is a wedding, everyone in the city knows about it because of the music which is heard day and night while the guests are present.

As we conclude our survey of Moslem home life, we must remember that the ideal for the home can never rise higher than the prevailing religious sanc-



tions in respect to marriage and divorce. As long as marriage is regarded as a kind of slavery in which the wife is considered the servant of her husband instead of his equal; as long as he requires her implicit obedience to his will, provided it is not contrary to the laws of Islam; as long as he may marry four wives, and keep as many concubines as he can afford; as long as he may divorce his wives at will and marry others in their place; as long as a man can do these things and still be considered a good Moslem, just so long will the Islamic conception of home and family be wholly inadequate to meet the requirements of these modern times.

Wherever we find exceptions to this statement—and the number of homes where better conditions are found is increasing in almost every Moslem land—the improvement must be attributed to Christian ideals. Radical changes are taking place today in spite of the forces of tradition and conservatism. The process of rebuilding society and the reconstruction of religious thought so as to bring Islam up to date constitute two of the major concerns of the reformers in India, Egypt, Iran, Syria, and Iraq, to say nothing of Turkey. Moslems themselves now realize with increasing force that the old wineskins simply cannot any longer hold the new wine without bursting.

## CHAPTER SIX

### POLITICS AND RELIGION

LET us return for the moment to our friend Mohammed Beg. It will be recalled that on his way to Mecca he was deeply impressed with the changes that he saw overtaking Islam, and that seemed to be gradually making it over into a different religion altogether. He was also greatly worried over the detailed reports that he heard of the wholesale political changes that had transformed Turkey, and had separated church and state. The problem that never ceased to bother him, almost to the point of distraction, after he had observed some of the changes taking place in the lives and customs of Moslems was, "Can a person be modern and a good Moslem at the same time?" His own feelings and his reactions as a strictly orthodox follower of Islam answered this question with an emphatic "No!"

#### THREE POINTS OF VIEW ON ISLAMIC REFORM

To one brought up as he had been, there could be no doubt about the matter. The law of Islam, based on the Koran and the Traditions, was the law of God. It spoke with the voice of authority. The program for all life, and all peoples, and all ages was laid down



there. The Law was the conscience of the Moslem. There was no need for change of the customs or rules of society contrary to the Law; in fact, even to suggest that these modern times required the wholesale change and adaptation of Islam was to Mohammed Beg the greatest heresy.

"Somehow," thought he, "these modern times must adjust themselves to Islam and its way of life. That is the real problem for Moslems to face. Making concessions to the West, which cares only for business, money, pleasure and comfort, is not the thing to do. That way lies the destruction of Islam. How one can possibly consider himself a Moslem and at the same time approve of bringing women out of the harem, the abolition of polygamy, the separation of religion and state, and even of doing away with the caliphate, is beyond me. No, one who wishes to reform Islam according to modern ideas cannot be a Moslem, and a true Moslem does not need to be modern, for the law of Islam is all right just as it is."

But Mohammed Beg does not have the last word on this subject. Ask a young Egyptian what he thinks about the matter, and he will present another side of the case. As an adherent of the modernist party in the country of the Nile he will tell you that he supports the position of Sheikh Mohammed Abduh, who is recognized the world over among Moslems as the greatest champion and defender of Islam that these modern times have known. He will declare that he fully believes in the reform of the Moslem educa-

tional system, and the adoption of everything valuable in Western civilization, as long as it is not contrary to the fundamental principles of Islam which are found in the Koran and the Traditions. He insists that Sheikh Mohammed Abduh was correct in holding that the best legal minds of Islam still have the right to interpret these ancient principles of the faith, and that they have the right to adapt the laws of Islam to meet the requirements of this modern age. Therefore, reform in Islam is proper and right, if the changes are carried out under the guidance of properly qualified legal advisers who act according to the fundamental principles of the faith. This method of changing Moslem doctrine is known as *ijma*.

"But of course," our Egyptian friend would say, "I seriously doubt if Mohammed Abduh could approve of the radical reforms which have taken place within the borders of Turkey, were he living today. It is impossible even for us modern reformers of Egypt, nationalists and devoted patriots though we are, to justify the complete separation of church and state in the ruthless manner in which it has been done there. And the extreme liberality of the reforms affecting the status of women and marriage, the suppression of religious orders and the like—well, they take our breath away! But after all who knows what will happen even here—in time? Allah alone knows that, and he is the all-wise and all-knowing!"

At the close of the World War the Turkish nationalists felt that the old orthodox Islamic religion had



## POLITICS AND RELIGION

reached the place where it had failed to keep with the needs of life, and was inadequate to solve problems of the nation. Kamal Atatürk clearly perceived that the interests of the Turkish nation must be made supreme, and the government and the entire life of the people must be modernized, if Turkey was to hold its place among the neighboring nations of the West. Consequently he gave every ounce of his energy to the reformation and reconstruction of the Turkish government and Turkish society. In this gigantic task he inspired his people with a great love of country, a deep patriotism, a profound belief in their own destiny as a nation, and a burning enthusiasm to work for the advancement of Turkey in every phase of life.

Today, the young Turk proudly calls himself a Moslem in spite of the amazing changes which have overtaken his country. He even regards these changes in the status of Islam as in every way beneficial to the religious life of his country. In fact he has been taught that these changes are in accordance with the inner spiritual genius of Islam itself, and that it is now the duty of all good Moslems within the bounds of Turkey to use their religion to further the interests of their country. In other words, if one would be a good Moslem he must be a good Turk. The thought thrills him, for is he not most of all anxious to see his country develop and take its rightful place beside the other countries of the West? Therefore, as a Turk he will cling to Islam and be as good a Moslem as he

## MOSLEM LOOKS AT LIFE

Islam is the religious part of his

three typical points of view in the way that differ widely from one another. The estimate of the relative truth of Islam can be determined without reference to the political teachings of Islam on the subject of politics and religion. It is necessary, therefore, that we look at this side of the matter for a bit.

### ISLAM AS A POLITICAL POWER

There is no quarrel between the politician and the clergy in Islam, for politics is religion and religion is politics. Islam is not so much a state religion as a religious state. And of course this all goes back to Mohammed's philosophy of religion. In his view Islam was a theocracy, that is, its real king and ruler was God, or Allah, himself, and the Prophet of Allah was to have supreme political power. According to this theory all life belonged to God, and all sensible people would of course submit to him. These sensible people who submitted to Allah and his Prophet and to their rule were called Moslems, those who submit. For them Allah opened a way of life in the Koran and the Traditions that provided for every aspect of their existence: the religious, the social, the political, and the economic. Politics and religion were not to be in water-tight compartments. They were ordained to be one and inseparable. The Prophet Mohammed, therefore, was not only prophet, he was also king. The rev-



elations he received related not only to how to worship God, but also how to rule men. In addition to ritual there was also law, and the law was the law of God.

As long as Mohammed lived there was direct access to the ultimate Lawgiver, and new laws were issued with divine authority as occasion arose. But after Mohammed died divine revelation ceased, and the Moslems were then left with only the sacred Koran and the Traditions of the Prophet as their guide and rule of conduct. The first caliph, Abu Bakr, who was elected to succeed Mohammed, could, of course, only succeed him as the religious ruler of the Moslem peoples. From then on the caliph remained in theory the nominal head of all Moslem peoples and all Moslem lands. These different lands and peoples might have kings or sultans of their own, but theoretically, at any rate, each king was supposed to derive his authority of kingship from the caliph of the Moslem peoples. Each ruler was in a sense regarded as the viceroy of the caliph, who, in turn, was regarded as the head of a vast Moslem empire made up of independent Moslem states. In each separate state the king was the head of the Moslem religion as well as of the affairs of government, and king and people alike looked to the caliph as the head of all Islam.

#### HOLY WAR

Because Islam started with the theory that the message of the Prophet must be given to all peoples and

countries, and that as soon as possible the whole world must be brought under the sway of Allah, Moslem rulers felt that they were commanded by God to extend their power. The peoples of the world, therefore, were divided into two distinct groups: the *Dar-ul-Islam*, the Abode of Islam, and the *Dar-ul-Harb*, the Abode of War, the latter a term used by Moslems for those countries which had not yet been brought under Moslem rule. Those who had a revealed religion, such as the Jews and Christians, were guaranteed religious freedom when they submitted to Moslem rule and paid the required taxes. Contrary to a general impression, compulsory conversion to Islam was against Moslem policy. It decreased the state revenues. It was religious enthusiasm plus desire for spoil that gave success to the Moslem armies.

Under this conception of things there was a further classification of the people of any given country: First, there were the Moslems. These were the real citizens and only they enjoyed all the privileges of free citizenship. Second, there were the people who had not yet accepted Islam, but who had nevertheless submitted to Moslem rule. For this privilege of being subjects of the Moslem government they were obliged to pay special taxes not levied on Moslems. Third, there were those who had not yet submitted to Moslem rule, and with whom technically the Moslem ruler was still at war.

While in some countries where Western powers are dominant or a great deal of enlightenment has come—



such as in Egypt, Iraq, India, Syria and Iran—these distinctions no longer exist, yet even today in Afghanistan and Arabia, where the purest Moslem rule prevails, it is not safe for Christians to enter except with the strictest guard and special permission from the authorities. Even Moslems who differ from the ruling powers on religious opinions are in danger of their lives. Not so many years ago there was a Moslem preacher of the heretical Moslem Qadiani sect from India who went to Kabul in Afghanistan to preach his doctrines. The orthodox religious leaders were so highly incensed against him that he was tried and condemned to death by the ancient Koranic method of stoning. A hole was dug in the ground, and he was buried up to his waist; then the multitude pelted him with stones until he died.

#### THE WANE OF ISLAMIC POLITICAL POWER

During many centuries when the caliphs held sway in Medina and Damascus, and in Baghdad of *Arabian Nights* fame, the political power of Islam and the caliphate was undisputed. In more recent centuries the sultan of Turkey was recognized as caliph and Constantinople became the center of Moslem political influence. During the decades just prior to the World War, Sultan Abdul Hamid made some interesting efforts to spread the doctrine of Pan-Islamism<sup>1</sup> in all countries where Moslems lived, with the hope that

<sup>1</sup> A term used by Moslems themselves to describe the political and social combination of all Moslems throughout the world.

Egypt and India, particularly, might rise in revolt against Great Britain, and join Turkey in the establishment of a modern world-wide Moslem empire with the Turkish caliph at its head. Thinking that he had the support of Germany in this project, Abdul Hamid joined the Central Powers of Europe during the World War—and lost.<sup>1</sup> A new Turkey emerged from the debacle, a Turkey which not only abolished the monarchy but the Turkish caliphate as well in 1924. So today the Moslem peoples are without a caliph. The office still exists but it has no occupant. The Moslem states of Turkey, Egypt, Arabia, Iraq, Afghanistan and the like are struggling on as best they can as separate nations, while Turkey as a republic has all but done away with Islam altogether, as we have already seen.

Most of these Moslem states now have modern legislatures, and with the exception of Turkey and Iran they are generally very careful to keep their legislation and laws well within the provisions of the *shariat*, or the Moslem legal code, which is based on the Koran and the Traditions. Turkey, however, has determined to turn her back on the East, and now faces West in matters of a social, political and industrial nature. The Turkish leaders have taken the position that Islam may remain the religion of the Turkish people as long as it does not interfere with their national development. That is, the Koran and the Traditions may be used for purposes of purely spiritual help and guidance, but they no longer remain the

<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed account, see Chapter Eight.



basic law of the country. Because he was powerful enough to do so, and because there was a large group willing to change their ways, Kamal Atatürk, the president of the Turkish republic, was able to abolish the use of the Turkish fez and introduce European hats, to outlaw the powerful dervish orders and confiscate their property, to bring women out of the harem, to make polygamy illegal, and to abolish Arabic as the mainstay of Turkish culture.

Iran has more recently followed Turkey's lead in breaking away from Moslem customs, traditions and laws, although remaining nominally a Mohammedan country. The Swiss code of laws has replaced the *shariat*. Marriage and divorce are now civil rather than religious matters. The abolition of the black shroudlike veil for the women and the introduction of Western hats and clothes for the men have been important developments of late. Even Moslem theological education is now taken over by the government Ministry of Public Institutions. To wear a turban the Moslem clergy must now pass a written examination given by the government. In short, in Iran, as in Turkey, the political force of Islam is gone and the people are beginning to question even its religious force.

In Egypt we find the Moslems are divided into two political parties: one the Conservative party, which is prepared to cooperate with the British government in the rule of the country, and the other the Independence party, which works for the complete independence of Egypt.

But in India the political interests of the large Moslem community are identical with the religious interests. In fact, there we have the whole country divided to a very large extent into political parties based on religious communities. The Moslems, Hindus, Sikhs and Christians are each allotted a certain number of seats in the legislatures in proportion to the relative size of their respective communities. In such a situation Moslems alone can represent Moslems, Hindus are elected entirely by Hindus, and Christians by Christians. It is as though in America we were to abolish the Democratic, Republican, and Socialist parties, and in their place found our politics on the religious differences of Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Jews. The communal system is a vicious one, and breeds all sorts of evils which are perpetuated in the name of religion. And it is due to Moslems rather than to Hindus that the system of communal representation is being continued in India. The Moslems fear the idea of a common electorate, for only in the separate communal system do they see any way to preserve the Islamic culture and religion. The one rallying cry which brings the Moslems of India together in a united purpose to stand up for their rights is the slogan, "Islam is in danger!" For Islam they will lay down their lives; and they do!

#### MOSLEM BROTHERHOOD

A strength of the Moslem community is the marked sense of brotherhood. Moslems of all nations and



racess regard each other as members of a great brotherhood in a way that is even more apparent than among Christians. The very salutation used among them (*Salam 'alaikum*, Peace be upon you) is an indication of this spirit of fraternity.

Within Islam this spirit is so strong that it breaks down barriers of race and color. There is no color or race problem in Islam, in the sense in which we use that term in Western lands. To this extent it certainly is far ahead of most Christian countries. The reason for this lack of race prejudice is not far to seek. The darker-skinned peoples form the vast majority of the adherents of Islam, and intermarriage between the races takes place freely and frequently. There are no separate mosques for Negro Moslems in Arabia or Egypt; and the spirit of brotherhood among Moslems in South Africa is in sharp contrast to the racial and color lines drawn by Christians in that same part of the world. In the worship of the mosque the prince may stand by the beggar; the black Negro by the fair Turk, for all are brothers in Islam. There are no "Jim Crow" theatres, hotels or railway cars in Moslem lands.

But after all that may be said on behalf of the genuine spirit of brotherhood that prevails in the Moslem world, it still remains that the conception of fraternity is strictly limited to the system itself. Islam knows only a brotherhood of Moslems, not a brotherhood of man. Even the salutation, "Peace be upon you," refers to the peace of Islam, and technically it

is not permitted for a Moslem to use this salutation to any except a Moslem brother. This limitation of brotherhood is one of the very great differences between Islam and Christianity. In Islam, as has been stated, mankind is divided into two major classes—the Abode of Islam and the Abode of War. Only those who are within the Abode of Islam are brothers. The rest of mankind must be treated differently; and they are. This is the limit of the Moslem ideal. The Christian ideal embraces all mankind in a brotherhood of love; and no matter how far Christians fall short of demonstrating this ideal in practice even among their own number, yet the ideal and the example of Jesus Christ are ever before them, to shame them and to urge them on to more complete realization of his teachings.

#### THE MOSLEM MISSIONARY

This attitude of Moslems toward those outside their faith inevitably affects the Islamic conception of missionary work or propaganda. Moslems are the ones who alone are guided by Allah. All others, especially idolaters, have gone astray, and are far from the straight path. It is the duty of Moslems to proclaim to them the way of truth, and to honor them by bestowing Islam upon them, even though they must first be conquered by the sword.

But taking a long view of history down through the ages, it may be said that the faith of Islam has been extended by peaceful propaganda, while the political



power of Islam has been spread by the sword. Through the centuries Moslem traders who were also devout preachers have left their impress on populations as widely separated as China and the heart of Africa. We are not so concerned here, however, with the past as with the present methods and objectives of Moslem propaganda.

Moslems are not ashamed to stand up for Mohammed, and to declare their faith in him. They are eager to share what they have with others, and every Moslem is a missionary. One finds them trying to win converts to their way of life as they trade in the bazaars and streets of practically every city of the Moslem world. There is little doubt that the spirit of boldness and absolute certainty begotten by the frequent repetition of the creed has been a mighty factor in strengthening faith and winning converts.

Islam places the religious before the material needs of men; for that reason there are no medical missions, no educational, industrial or agricultural missions, in the Moslem missionary program. Islam sees but one thing, that great sections of the human race are not Moslem and that they must be convinced of the truth of the Prophet's message.

The traditional training given to young students in the theological schools of Cairo and Damascus, Iraq and India, has been essentially a preparation for preaching. Today, however, a new trend is to be discerned. The following quotation appeared in a newspaper published in Cairo in 1935:

The propagation of Islam and its extension in the early centuries after the Hegira was only made by means of missionaries. Besides, there is no reason why the missionary should not work his way into every circle to dispose of his goods and the religious conceptions of which he is the apostle.

And so we propose to the rector of the Azhar University to combine a study of the commercial sciences and accountancy with a program of religious instruction of missionaries, so that the Azhar missions may propagate trade and religion at the same time. The missionaries will carry on their business and will also preach in the countries to which they are sent. Their commission will be in harmony with the precepts of Islam, which require that a man should work for God and for the world. After all, was not the Prophet a trader, and did not his friends live by trading? And did that prevent them from preaching the true religion? If it is taken up, as we hope it will be, in a serious manner, we are prepared to explain the details of the scheme from the practical point of view; for example, a company might be formed to supply these missionaries with funds, and they in turn would have a share in the profits. Naturally this would make it possible to keep a large number of missionaries in the field.

It must not be forgotten, on the other hand, that Islam does have something of very positive value to offer a certain class of people. Through it the African tribes that it has touched are undoubtedly elevated to some extent, and the outcastes of India who have embraced Islam have secured an equality of status with other members of the democratic Moslem faith that was utterly denied them in Hinduism. In fact, one of the recent missionary organizations founded at Delhi



has for its aim the conversion of that entire section of the population belonging to the depressed classes, some sixty million people. But the fact remains that Moslem missions lack a sufficient motive because there is at the heart of Islam no compelling love for man as man; and without this they cannot and do not provide an adequate social program.

#### MOSLEM RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

If the missionary motive in Islam is inadequate, its conception of freedom of thought is hopeless and its capacity for intolerance is amazing. Heresy hunting within Islam has always existed, and from the time of Al-Hallaj, one of the early Moslem mystics who lived in Baghdad, right down to the present century in Afghanistan, there have been martyrs who have paid with their lives for daring to disagree with orthodoxy. One can understand how these attitudes and the inevitable persecution arising from them might go unchecked through the Middle Ages, for the Christian church was guilty of the same intolerance in that period; but it is hard for us to comprehend how such a condition can exist in this modern age.

The reason for all this, of course, is that quite generally speaking Islam is still under the curse of the spirit of the Middle Ages. It partakes of the spirit of the century of its birth, and part of that spirit is intolerance. In recent years Moslem scholars in Cairo who have attempted to apply Western critical methods to Islamic literature have suffered severe persecution

by the reactionary party. The Moslem authorities of Egypt have forbidden Ahmadiya missionaries from India to carry on their work in the country, and have also forbidden the circulation of their English translation of the Koran. The followers of the Ahmadiya sect are also persecuted by the other Moslems of India, where they often have been denied the use of regular mosques for worship, and have had in many cases to build mosques of their own. Within the past two years the Nizam of Hyderabad, the head of the largest Moslem state in India, has been compelled to issue a public statement professing his orthodoxy in order to set at rest rumors among the faithful that His Exalted Highness held religious views which were contrary to Islam. The religion of Islam is first and always a religion of orthodoxy. One must conform or suffer the consequences.

If the faithful are thus kept in line by the strictest watch on their movements and beliefs through fear of consequences, it is not difficult to imagine the result for those who become apostates, that is, who forsake Islam entirely and adopt another religion. The front door of entrance to Islam stands wide open, but the door that leads out is forever closed. Apostasy by male adult Moslems who are sane is, when uncompelled, punishable with death. Genuine freedom of conscience is impossible. Moslems who have changed their religion have been regarded by their friends and relatives as despicable in the extreme. Even in lands like Egypt, Iraq and India, where more enlightened



law prevails and the strict requirements of the *shariat* cannot be legally carried out, a convert from Islam runs the risk of suffering secret death. Little wonder that Moslems are often forbidden by their leaders to purchase and read Christian books and tracts, and that again and again these same books and tracts, and the Bible as well, have been publicly torn up, destroyed, or burned by irate *mullahs* in every Moslem land. Little wonder, then, that when such religious intolerance pervades the whole community there are so few converts from Islam to Christianity. That many do brave persecution and even death, however, is shown by the stories of Moslem converts given in the next chapter.

#### RELIGIOUS REGULATION OF PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There are many important public questions which in Moslem countries are strictly regulated by religious considerations. In fact, where strictly Moslem government prevails the ruler is under obligation to follow the legal opinion of the learned doctors of Islam, one or more of whom is officially associated with him. In the days of the Turkish caliphs this officer was known as the Sheikh ul Islam; he largely controlled the policies of the country, and decided what things were permissible and what were not. Of course Turkey today as a republic is free from this dead hand of the past; but in Egypt all such matters are still controlled in great measure by the opinion of the Islamic doctors of law of Al Azhar University

in Cairo, who virtually rule the land of the Pharaohs.

Whether they like it or not, very often the governments of Moslem peoples are forced to yield to the opinions of religious leaders even on matters that to us would seem to be entirely secular. In Islam nothing is strictly secular. Politics and religion seem to form a natural blend; consequently we must consider as a part of the subject of this chapter such diverse questions as education, the prohibition of the use of alcoholic beverages, religious endowments, slavery, and the influence of communism.

1. *Education.* In Islam education is strictly regulated by the requirements of religion. As we have already seen in the preceding chapter, the child has his first reading lesson from the Koran; and to learn it all by heart is one of the most commendable things any Moslem boy can do. To lessons on the creed and the practical duties of religion are added elementary arithmetic, geography, and Moslem history. Usually little primary schools are held in the mosques, and the village *imam*, who leads the prayers, is also the teacher. The advanced Arabic schools have very extended courses in all the Moslem studies, which include the art of reading the Koran correctly; the commentaries on the Koran; the Traditions; theology in all its branches; canon law; Arabic grammar; and Moslem history. No Moslem is considered well and truly educated unless he has had a thorough grounding in these subjects. For this reason, among others, it is not to be wondered at that there is so much illiter-



acy in Moslem lands, and that education remains the privilege of the few.

Until recent years Moslem religious leaders would not permit their people to be contaminated by the study of modern science, or English and other European languages; but gradually the opposition to this has been broken down, and today even in the famous Azhar University in Cairo, stronghold of all things Islamic, one may find a fairly up-to-date curriculum offered to the students. All through the Moslem world there are schools and colleges, conducted for girls as well as boys on the most approved Western lines. Religious leaders have had to consent to these changes because of the great demand for progress, but in spite of this the real standards of Islamic culture are maintained by those ancient Moslem schools which still follow the traditional Arabic curriculum. Needless to say, the orthodox do not regard with favor any introduction of liberalism into education, though up to the present they have not been able to stem the tide. The opinion is undoubtedly gaining ground that one may study English and Western science and wear European trousers and hat, and even that a woman may go unveiled, and still be a faithful follower of the Prophet.

2. *Prohibition of alcoholic drinks.* The prohibition of alcoholic beverages is one of the cardinal points of Islam, and a very good point it is. Among Moslems there simply is no discussion as to whether the use of alcoholic drinks is permissible. It is forbidden in the

Koran and that is the end of the matter. Consequently in Egypt, Palestine, Syria, Iraq, India and elsewhere Christian lecturers and organizers of the prohibition movement are received with the greatest cordiality, and given generous support in all their efforts to abolish the liquor traffic. Moslem leaders in these lands greatly deplore the extent to which the use of liquor has made headway in the Moslem community—and the shame of it is that this is directly attributable to contact with that part of our Western civilization which is least Christian in spirit as well as in practice. It is only fair to say that when the United States adopted the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution Moslem temperance workers in many lands rejoiced that at last they had a strong ally on their side in the world temperance movement. But when this same amendment was repealed in 1933, they were deeply disappointed, and said, "America has let us down. If we Moslems had our way about it, the whole world would be dry, for Islam is the greatest temperance organization in the world!" They are right; it is.

3. *Religious endowments.* Religious endowments are carefully watched and protected by Moslems. In this class of property come all sorts of buildings, lands and sums of money set apart for religious purposes, or any fund for the general welfare of the community. In the category of buildings fall particularly mosques, monasteries, tombs and graveyards. A building once used as a mosque may never be used for any other purpose whatsoever. Once having been used as a place



of worship, and dedicated to the service of God, no mortal hand shall ever violate it. Even though it may be in the heart of a valuable business section of a city, the mosque must not be touched. Many have been the bloody quarrels in India between the Moslem and Hindu communities over the question of the possession of a mosque. In the same way the Jews and Arabs in Palestine have squabbled over holy places in Jerusalem—a holy city to the Arab as well as to the Jew. Similarly tombs of the sainted dead, which may be found in unusual and out of the way places, are considered sacred trusts for the living, and they must be protected from violation. Monasteries, too, the headquarters of the dervish orders, are considered in the privileged class of property.

But modern Turkey here as elsewhere has fearlessly dealt with the issue. Her government has abolished the dervish orders and confiscated their property. This was a bold step. No other Moslem government has dared to do a thing like that, not even such non-Moslem governments as Great Britain and France. They would not risk a revolution. But Turkey is mistress in her own house, and besides she is more modern than Moslem.

4. *Slavery*. And now we must consider the question of slavery in Islam. Africa is the headquarters of the slave trade, and Arab traders make great profit from the nefarious business. The League of Nations is doing its best to put an end to it, and the European warships of all nations cooperate in the hottest waters of

the earth—the Persian Gulf and the Red Sea—in an effort to break up this infamous commerce in human beings, black ivory. Even King Ibn Saoud of Arabia has given assistance in this worthy object. But in spite of this it is estimated that no fewer than five thousand men, women and children are taken across the Red Sea from Africa to Arabia each year. And furthermore, even an Islamic ruler is helpless in the face of the Koranic permission which allows the faithful to keep slaves if they wish.

Of course it is only fair to say that there are large areas in the Moslem world today where Moslems do not hold slaves; and in addition, many enlightened Moslems look upon the practice with as much horror as anyone could. It is even asserted that the Koran, while allowing slavery, points to a higher way of life, for it says that freeing slaves is an act of merit, and by it one makes atonement for sins. (5: 91.) But the fact remains that in Islam slavery is lawful.

5. *Communism*. Finally let us consider the attitude of Islam toward communism, for like Christianity it is face to face with this amazing human experiment in Russia. The Union of Socialist Soviet Republics has been as ruthless in its dealings with Moslems as with Christians. Mosques have been closed, Moslem clergymen imprisoned or put to death, and every effort made to put an end to Islam as a religion. Polygamy has been ended, and women have been brought out of their traditional seclusion. In desperation a group of Moslems from Russian Turkestan even sent an appeal to



His Holiness the Pope seeking his assistance in the common cause of trying to save religion, Christianity and Islam alike, from the desperate assaults of an anti-religious government.

Islam and atheistic communism cannot mix. They are at opposite extremes: to the one God is all; to the other God is nothing. But of the two communism has a better appreciation of human values. Both offer their challenge to the world: Islam with its religion which is politics; and communism with its politics which is religion.

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE YOUNG MOSLEM LOOKS AT CHRISTIANITY

IT was between Old Babylon and Baghdad on the journey through Iraq. The third-class compartment of the train was crowded. Uncouth, illiterate, dirty Bedouins from the desert, with their cumbersome flowing robes and piles of luggage, occupied the greater part of the space. But there were a few young men of the educated effendi class who were seated next to us. Because they were in government employ they knew some English, and it was not long before we engaged one of these young Iraqis in conversation. He said his country had made great progress since the World War. A modern representative form of government had been set up, Baghdad was fast changing its atmosphere of *The Arabian Nights* for that of a European capital, a modern system of education was being developed, the Iraqis had taken charge of their own army and air force, and their country was now a member of the League of Nations. On the whole, they had much for which they were grateful to the British. Then I surprised him with the question, "Are you a Christian?" To which he immediately replied, "Thank God, no!"



Here we have a glimpse of the problem of the Moslem East facing the Christian West. The young Moslem looks at the West with longing eyes. He wants its culture, its comforts, its educational system, its industrial improvements, its democracy, its freedom of the sexes, its electric power, trains, automobiles, airplanes—in short, its material and social blessings. But he does not want Christianity. To him Christianity stands for the Crusades, the World War, and exploitation of his people. To him the culture and material comforts of the West are not part and parcel of Christianity. He can have these and still keep Islam.

And besides, why should he desire to give up Islam? As religions go it is superior to Christianity. It is more up to date, more modern, for it began six centuries later in time. Christianity is like an antiquated automobile. One would not think of buying a 1916 model when the latest streamlined model of the current year is to be had. Islam is like this latest model which supersedes all former models because of its superiority in design and efficiency in operation. As one student of Islam puts it, the Moslem sincerely thinks that Christianity does not offer men and women a religious experience that is higher and better and more perfect than that offered by Islam, but, on the other hand, that it drags them back to a religious stage that for a long time has been a back number. He thinks that we are turning the clock backwards.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The Moslem Point of View," by "Orientalist," in *The Moslem World*, January, 1936, p. 26.

## MOSLEM MISCONCEPTIONS OF CHRISTIANITY

"Thank God, no!" Thankful he was not a Christian! His answer startled me for a moment, but considering the Moslem point of view with reference to Christianity, that was the only answer my young Moslem companion could give. For Islam is shot through with the most amazing misconceptions concerning Christian belief and practices. And these misconceptions of the Moslem must be clearly understood by us if we are to give his views sympathetic consideration. Let us look now at the Moslem criticisms of Christianity. Some of them will appear at once as absurd; perhaps others will do us good.

1. *The text of the Bible has been corrupted and it is not to be relied upon.* As we have seen in Chapter Three, the Bible is regarded by Moslems as not genuine, either in the Old or the New Testament. This is the view of scripture that Mohammed held, and to Moslems it is completely true. As for the corruption and changing of the text of the Old Testament by the Jews, that charge has never been proved. And the Gospel which God revealed in the form of a sacred book to Jesus, as the Koran is said to have been revealed to Mohammed—well, there never was any such book. The revelation of his mind, and heart, and purpose, and will for man which God gave to the world was Jesus Christ. The real gospel of Christianity is not a book, but a life.

2. *Christians worship three gods.* This idea, of course, is due to a misconception of the Christian



teaching concerning the Trinity. And the three gods which the Moslem believes the Christian worships are the Father, the Mother, and the Son. In other words, they are God the Father, Mary the mother of Jesus, and Jesus. Little does a Moslem comprehend the real Christian significance of God, who is not only one in personality and power and love, but also in the revealing of himself to the world in Jesus Christ and to individuals by his indwelling Holy Spirit. But all the Moslem can see in the Christian Trinity is the absurd mathematical equation that  $1 + 1 + 1 = 1$ .

3. *The Christian conception that Jesus is the son of God is utter foolishness and the very worst heresy.* The Koran teaches concerning God, "He begetteth not, neither is he begotten." Therefore the Christians are all wrong. The Moslem idea concerning Jesus' sonship to God is that God became a physical father in the natural, human sense of the word—which of course is absurd to the Christians as well as to the Moslems. Christians reject the notion of the physical sonship of Christ as quickly and as vigorously as do the Moslems. However, the Koran gives the Moslem no clue to the real Christian conception of the spiritual sonship of Jesus, which is that Jesus is God's son of the Holy Spirit, for "God is a Spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth."

4. *The crucifixion is a lie.* In the Koran the Moslem reads that Jesus was not crucified, that he was not slain, but another whom God made to resemble him

was crucified in his place, while Jesus was taken up alive into heaven. That which is the very heart of the Christian faith is denied by the Moslem, who says it is not true and who finds it a stumbling-block to his understanding of Christianity. And "so the cross which to us is the most sacred symbol of our faith, is to them [the Moslems] merely the symbol of a tremendous hoax perpetrated on this believing world."<sup>1</sup> By one modern sect of Moslems, the Ahmadiyas of India, this denial of Jesus' death on the cross takes another form. They are willing to admit that he was crucified, but they claim that he did not die on the cross. He only swooned. Then his disciples took him down from the cross, and by the application of a marvelous salve restored him to life. He then secretly left Palestine because of the persecution of the Jews, and went on a preaching mission to Kashmir, where he finally died. In fact, the Ahmadiyas claim to have discovered his very grave in Srinagar which they point out to inquiring visitors and which the writer has also seen with his own eyes!

The reason assigned by Moslems for calling the crucifixion of Jesus absurd is that since he was a prophet of God it was beneath his dignity to die the death of a common criminal. God would never allow that, and hence took him alive to heaven. Therefore they assert that Islam does greater honor to Christ than does Christianity.

<sup>1</sup> "The Moslem Point of View," by "Orientalist," in *The Moslem World*, January, 1936, p. 28.



5. *The Christian conception of the atonement is entirely wrong, unbelievable and highly immoral.* The Moslems understand Christians to believe that one may do any amount of evil one may choose without fear of consequences, for Jesus died to save man from all sin. Opposed to this is the Christian view, that while there is forgiveness for sins, yet Jesus Christ also imparts power to keep one from yielding to temptation.

6. *Jesus is not the perfect example of humanity that Christians make him out to be.* For instance, he was rude to his mother at the wedding feast in Cana of Galilee, and did not show her proper filial respect when she said to her, "Woman, what have I to do with thee?" He did not live a practical, well rounded life full of activity. He was not a man of affairs, nor the founder of a great nation, nor a lawgiver, nor a king, nor the leader of great armies. On the contrary, he was a meek and humble ascetic who renounced the world and its lusts, never married, and knew nothing of the problems of business or family life and the rearing of children. With such a limited range of human experience, how can Jesus be considered the ideal man?

7. *Furthermore, the teaching of Jesus is highly impractical.* How can one live up to his standards? Non-resistance to evil; turning the other cheek; going the second mile; praying for one's enemies; and maintaining purity not only in action but in the heart as well! How can such things be? After all, this is a life

of flesh and blood we live, and man cannot be expected to accomplish the impossible. Christianity is a kill-joy religion, and makes no provision for the weakness of the flesh. Islam does. Christian ideals are unattainable and unworkable. Islam is both easy and workable. But perhaps there may be such a thing as a religion being too easy, and too workable for man's good. Was not Browning thinking of this when he said:

Heaven must exceed our grasp,  
Or what's a heaven for?

8. *Christians are hypocritical.* They do not live up to their religious ideals. They call Jesus the Prince of Peace, and yet no nations today fight as much as the Christian nations do. The World War was a terrific blow to the prestige of Christianity among the non-Christian peoples of the East. Jesus bade his followers be pure in heart, and yet Christian lands are not free from prostitution and the white slave traffic. Not only so, but the great freedom between the sexes is highly detrimental to morality. Jesus forbade divorce except for adultery, and yet divorce has become a great social disease of Christian countries, particularly in America. What can Christians say to this just criticism?

9. *Christianity sanctions the use of alcoholic liquors, whereas Islam enforces prohibition.* Of course it is not correct to say that the use of liquor is sanctioned by Christianity, but the fact that liquor is used so freely in Western Christian nations and often by



people who regard themselves as Christians gives the Moslems ample room for believing that drinking is one of the abominable things permitted by Christianity, like the use of pork.

10. *Western Christians are guilty of race prejudice.* Moslems criticize them severely for this. What better describes the Moslem point of view than the following:

Islam preaches brotherhood and lives it. Christians preach brotherhood but do not live it. The Moslem missionary goes to a pagan tribe. He marries four wives from the tribe. He has sons and daughters, and he marries his sons to their daughters, and his daughters to their sons. He is one of them. The Christian missionary comes, but does he marry even one wife from their tribe? No! he brings a white wife from his own land, he sends his sons to find white wives in that homeland, and his daughters he would sooner shoot dead than marry to the young men of the tribe.<sup>1</sup>

But is that all there is to it? If so, then the Moslem is right.

11. *Christianity is but an agency of the forces of Western imperialism.* There are two reasons for this criticism: One is that the Moslem can never blot the history of the Crusades from his memory. The other is that so often he has seen Moslem power give way before a superior force from the West. He has seen that happen in Egypt and the Sudan, North Africa, Syria, Palestine, Iraq, and India. Following the ar-

<sup>1</sup> "The Moslem Point of View," by "Orientalist," in *The Moslem World*, January, 1936, p. 41.

mies the Christian missionaries have come, under the conqueror's protection; and the Moslem has felt that to become a Christian was to join the ranks of the oppressors, and to be disloyal to one's own nationality. Furthermore, the missionaries bring with them an alien culture and teach foreign languages; and they are popularly supposed to be the supporters and agents of an economic system that exploits the native peoples and their countries. And how can one blame the Moslem for being a bit suspicious when he sees the huge sums of money made by foreign companies from the jute factories of Bengal, from the great oil fields of Burma, Iran and Iraq, from the copper and diamond mines of South Africa, and from the cotton of India?

12. *Finally, Christianity is divided, and many of its sects enter into bitter competition.* The Moslem, in spite of the sects in Islam, is terribly confused by this lack of unity in Christianity. He cannot understand why, if Christians worship one God and recognize Jesus as the Savior of the world and use one Bible, there should be such innumerable divisions: Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists, Congregationalists, Seventh Day Adventists and so forth. Nor can we Christians understand why it should continue to be so, since there is so much emphasis these days on the essential unity of all Christians. If the Moslem is interested in Christianity at all, he is likely to ask, "Which of these various sects represents the true Christian faith?"



## MOSLEM APPRECIATION OF JESUS

The Moslem attitude toward Jesus Christ and Christianity is not entirely one of criticism and depreciation. A young Moslem said to me one day, "We Moslems hold Jesus Christ in greater honor and respect than you Christians do. We consider him a great prophet, and we never mention his name without prefixing the title *Hazrat* (His Excellency) and follow it with a prayer for him—"On him be peace." You Christians do not show him that much respect."

Undoubtedly, for the most part, Moslems do honor Jesus. It would be strange if they did not, for while the Koran has a great many disparaging things to say about Christians it has nothing to say against him who is the Christian's Lord. Jesus is in the line of divine prophetic succession; he is called "a Sign to the worlds," "the Word of truth," and "the Word of God." He is called also "a Spirit from God," "Spirit of God," "the Messenger of God," "the Servant of God," and he is spoken of as "illustrious in this world and the next." Furthermore, Moslems regard Jesus as the great healer. Also, like Pilate, they "find no fault in him," though they are inclined to the opinion, as previously pointed out, that his virtue was of the negative sort rather than positive. Many of them look for his return again at the Last Day when he will fight for the ultimate victory of Islam, slay the Antichrist, kill all the swine, break the cross, and reign on the earth as a righteous king for a period of forty years. During this time they say he will marry, have

children, and finally die and be buried at Medina near Mohammed between the graves of the first two caliphs, Abu Bakr and Omar.

Various Moslem writers show their appreciation of Jesus by giving alleged quotations from his sayings. Here are a few of them that bear at least a curious resemblance to his words in the Gospels: "Verily, you will obtain what you like only by your patience with what you dislike!" "O company of disciples, how many lamps has the wind put out, and how many worshipers has self-conceit spoiled!" But perhaps the best of all is the one which the great Moghul emperor of India, Akbar, had inscribed over the doorway of one of the buildings in his capital city of Fatehpur Sikri. It reads, "Jesus, peace be upon him, said, 'The world is a bridge, so pass over it, but do not build upon it.'"

One of the Moslem traditions about Jesus gives the following singular picture which describes his superiority over others. It goes thus, "No one followed Jesus who was his equal; and he never scolded an orphan; and he never laughed immoderately; and he never even drove a fly from off his face; and he never broke a promise once given; and he never was frivolous."

But with all their words of respect to Jesus, Moslems give him but lip service. They miss the essential part of his life and work and teaching when they eliminate the cross. That which means most to Christians, that which makes him our Lord and Master, has been denied as an imposture. But signs are not



wanting that thinking Moslems here and there are beginning to pay attention to the cross and the suffering and sacrificial death of our Lord and to sense their meaning. A well educated Moslem said to me one day, "Mr. Gandhi has done more than all you missionaries to show me the meaning of the crucifixion. The way he has suffered for his people here in India, even by going to prison, and fasting almost to death, has greatly touched the hearts of us Moslems, and we are beginning to see a new meaning in the Christian story of the crucifixion. After all, maybe the message of the cross does hold the secret for the rebuilding of the world."

#### THE CHRISTIAN CONTRIBUTION TO MOSLEM LIVES

Nor are Moslems entirely wanting in their appreciation of Christian homes and individuals. Here is the case of a Moslem youth who accepted an invitation to live for a time as a member of a Christian family. He belonged to one of the best Moslem homes of his city. His father was a learned and respected gentleman in government service. His mother also was of high social standing. The young man loved his home and had many good things to say in appreciation of it. When the time came to leave his Christian friends he used words to this effect: "I have been grateful for the privilege of being in your home, eating at the family table, and thus getting to know the various members of the family and guests who have come. I am greatly impressed with the things you talk

about, the ideals and standards you hold in life, and especially the sincerity and purity which I see lived out daily."

In spite of many examples to the contrary in recent years, notably in Egypt and Turkey, I am sure it can be said without fear of contradiction that Moslems are more inclined to learn about Christianity, and more appreciative of Christian effort among them, than has been known before. Christian literature prepared for Moslems is produced particularly in Syria, Egypt, Iran, India, Java, and China, and reports come from all countries that for this there is an unprecedented demand.

Christian schools and colleges are frequently selected by Moslem parents for their children because they say frankly they prefer the sort of atmosphere which pervades the school, and the type of character it develops. In the country of Algeria in North Africa the Christian missions conduct homes or hostels in connection with the schools run by the French government, and it is a common practice for the Moslem Kabyle tribes to send their children to these Christian homes because of the excellent care and training they get there. In India there is in operation a "conscience clause" which, in those Christian schools receiving government grants-in-aid, makes Bible study voluntary and forbids the school to make it compulsory. Parents may, if they so desire, have their sons and daughters excused from attendance at the Bible class. But it is a well known fact that of the thousands of



Moslem children who attend Christian schools in India, only a very small number have ever yet taken advantage of this privilege of exemption from the study of the Bible.

And who can ever measure the gratitude of Moslems of the Near East, the education of whose sons in Robert College, Constantinople, in the American University of Beirut, Alborz College of Teheran, and in other institutions founded under Christian auspices has been a potent factor in bringing about the blessings of the new day in those Moslem lands? In these colleges young men and young women have been trained in all the branches of modern learning, including science and medicine, and they have gone out to serve their people with the spirit of him who said, "I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

But more interesting even than this, perhaps, is the appreciation of medical missions by the Wahhabi king of Saoudi Arabia, Ibn Saoud. Not only once has he called upon the doctors of the mission of the Reformed Church in America to come from Bahrein to attend him and his family; but he has done it so often that now these Christian doctors may be called his family physicians—the royal physicians of the Kingdom of the Hejaz! And if this sense of appreciation is true of His Highness, Ibn Saoud, how much more true is it of the tens of thousands of humble Moslems who owe their lives to the devoted skill and service of the Christian doctors who serve the Moslem world at such strategic points as Old Cairo, Egypt; Kuweit,

Arabia; Teheran, Iran; Srinagar, Kashmir; Delhi, India; or Bannu on the borders of Afghanistan.

In the hospital at Bannu, Dr. Theodore Leighton Pennell, an Englishman, literally gave his life for those wild Moslem tribes of the frontier. A very sick man, a Moslem, was rushed into the hospital one day, and had to be operated on at once. The operation was exceedingly dangerous because of the serious nature of the infection. Dr. Pennell knew that in performing the operation he took his life in his hands, for if he should get infected himself he would be almost sure to die. Still he took the chance to try to save the man's life. He operated. Through a small scratch on his finger, at first unnoticed, he got the dreaded infection. He died. The other man lived. "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friend." So impressed were the wild Afghans of those mountains that they vied with each other for the privilege of carrying the body of Dr. Pennell to its last resting place, for they said, "He was one of us. He loved us, and did more for us than one of our own people would do."

#### HEROIC CONVERTS TO CHRISTIANITY

But the best testimony of all concerning the appreciation of Christianity by Moslems is to be found in the lives of those rare souls among Moslems themselves who from time to time have braved all sorts of dangers and perils to become followers of Jesus Christ. The sacrifice and devotion of many of these



true followers of our Lord might well cause some of us lukewarm Western Christians to blush with shame. In Iran they tell the story of Dr. Saeed Khan, known as the beloved physician of Teheran. He belonged to the fanatical Kurds. When he had made up his mind to become a Christian his Moslem relatives seriously objected. He was watched as closely as a prisoner in his own house. "He was beaten savagely and branded with red-hot irons. Saeed suffered intensely, yet he remained calm and prayerful. He prayed, 'Blessed Jesus, open their eyes to see. Give them wisdom to understand, and faith to believe.' " <sup>1</sup> Today, in spite of the fact that he is a convert from Islam, he has risen as a Christian physician and surgeon until Moslem rulers beg for his aid. Standing before kings, or serving the common people, Dr. Saeed as an ambassador of Christ adds new chapters of glory to the continuing Book of Acts.

Or consider the following inspiring cases of young men who because of the power of the new life that was imparted to them were not afraid or ashamed to be known as Christians. Rather they counted all their former social position and ease and wealth as so much rubbish compared with the great joy and peace that had come to them through the personal knowledge of Jesus Christ.

Mirza Mohammed belonged to a well to do family in L——. When a mere youth he joined one of the

<sup>1</sup> *The Beloved Physician of Teheran*, by Isaac M. Yonan, p. 60. Nashville, Cokesbury Press, copyright 1934. Used by permission.

mystic orders of Islam and tried to learn the art of meditation to satisfy the spiritual hunger in his heart. Finally despairing of finding satisfaction in this way, he turned after some years to a study of the Bible, and made a more careful examination of the Koran in order to compare the two books. The more he studied both, the more he says he was impressed with the sinless character of Christ, as compared with the Prophet Mohammed's own confession in the Koran that he was a sinner and that he prayed for God's forgiveness. He continued this examination of Christianity until, he says, he was firmly convinced that Christ's teachings were the only ones for him to follow. His life has been a splendid testimony for many years of the genuineness of his faith. His Moslem friends and relatives, who repudiated him at first, are proud to own him now, and he has nobly served as a member of the staff of a well known Christian college for a long period.

John Abdullah is another interesting illustration of a transformed life. Born in the large city of C——, he says he grew up with a peculiar aversion to Christianity, and especially to the teaching about the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross. Since the Koran teaches that Christ was not crucified and that he did not give his life upon the cross, the very idea that Christians should make this claim was repulsive. It was the greatest heresy. He used to tear up every gospel portion or leaflet that he could get hold of.

One day, however, he heard an interpretation of



the cross which gripped him, and which ultimately resulted in his conversion. It was the story of a mother whose little girl's clothes caught fire and who, tearing the clothes from her own body, used them to beat out the flames. She saved the little one's life, but sustained deep and ugly wounds on her own hands which made them crooked and unsightly. When the child grew old enough to observe carefully her mother's scarred hands, she said to her mother one day, "Mother, I don't like your hands. They are so crooked and scarred and ugly. They are not like other people's hands." Then the mother explained how these scars had come. The little girl understood, and kissing her mother's hands she replied, "Now, mother, I understand, and I think yours are the most beautiful hands in the world, because they saved my life."

Abdullah says that this touching story unlocked for him the meaning of the crucifixion, and forever changed the course of his life. The assurance that Christ had through his own sacrifice upon the cross somehow saved the lives of even unbelievers like himself gave him courage, and sustained him through the fierce and bitter persecution which his relatives visited upon him when he became a Christian. They would hide his Bible, and even burned one copy after another. Finally they forced him to leave home, and he became a wanderer in distant parts of the country. But through it all he remained faithful to his Lord, and today he is one of the most devoted followers of Christ, and one of the most beloved evangelists and

teachers in the whole of southern Asia, admired and respected by Moslems as well as by Christians.

Sultan Mohammed was a young Moslem who belonged to one of the royal families of Afghanistan. He went to Bombay when in his teens, and while there became interested in Christianity. At first his chief interest was in arguing against it. He was a fiery opponent, but ultimately his passionate criticism changed to admiration, and today there is no more fearless apologist for Christ in India than this exiled princely follower of Jesus Christ. For many years he has not been able to return to his native land, for to do so would mean death.

How little are the sacrifices of the disciples of Christ in distant lands appreciated! The Christianity that these men know has been purchased at a great price. Such examples as these can be explained only in terms of a deep religious conviction and the working of a powerful transforming faith in Jesus Christ. No other explanation is possible.

These few illustrations stand out among the increasingly large number of those who are turning from Islam to Christ. There are thousands of such followers of Christ, especially in India, Iran, Sumatra, and Java. These are people who have openly identified themselves with the Christian church. In addition, there are unknown numbers of secret believers, both men and women, who are found in nearly all Moslem lands. More than at any previous time the young Moslem of today looks at Christianity, and in



many countries he is seriously interested. In spite of his prejudices—for some of which his own religion is responsible, for others, the Christians themselves—Christianity is the one religion of the world besides his own that challenges his attention and interest.

Generally speaking, however, the young Moslem is frankly hostile to the missionary enterprise. Perhaps this attitude is due as much to the fear of interference and domination by the Western nations from which the missionaries come as to an innate hostility to Christianity as a religion. While there is a desire to take over just as much of Western civilization as possible and still remain Moslem, most countries do all in their power to limit missionary influence. In Turkey, for instance, mission schools may be operated, but the Bible may not be taught, nor any religious services held. Christians may hold services for themselves, but preaching in the marketplace or on the streets or any effort at proselyting is forbidden by law. Perhaps this, however, is only a passing phase, and the time will come when these lands will enjoy a larger measure of religious freedom. The present policy is based on the assumption that it is not good for society for a man to change his religion, especially if it means changing from Islam to something else!

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### ISLAM CHALLENGES THE WORLD

**I**SLAM challenges the world! To modern ears these words sound strange indeed, and hopelessly unreal. We are familiar with such headlines as "Communism challenges the world"; "The menace of Fascism"; and "Naziism a threat to world peace." But somehow the phrase "Islam challenges the world" seems out of date, and it leaves us cold. At most it reminds us of things we read in our histories about the Crusades, and pre-war Turkish atrocities visited upon the helpless Armenians—things which belong mostly to a dim and distant past and have no challenge in them for the modern world.

But wait a moment. It must not be forgotten that the things we have been considering about Islam in the previous pages of this book are a part of this very real world in which we are now living. The two hundred and fifty million Moslems who live mostly in Europe, Africa and Asia, forming a huge bloc of humanity in the heat belt of the world, are a very large and important part of this great human family of ours. Their history has been strangely and intimately, and often tragically, interwoven with that of Christian nations. For ten centuries, from the seventh



to the seventeenth, Islam swept everything before it in its great onrush, and won victories from Morocco to Manila which have not been obliterated to this day. Throughout these lands from West to East Christian churches and Hindu and Buddhist temples may be found which for centuries have been converted into mosques where the Moslem worships Allah.

"Yes," you say, "all very good. But those days of challenge belong to the past. What of the present? Are the Moslems planning a new holy war, a *jihad*, or whatever you call it? Are they about to summon their fanatic hosts once more to launch a great campaign against the non-Moslem nations of the world and offer them the Koran or the sword? If so, who is the caliph and leader of the faithful who is planning such a vast new world war—for everyone knows that the Moslem world has been without a caliph since the Turks deposed the last of the Ottoman caliphs in 1924? Since then the different Moslem nations have not been able to agree upon a successor. So who is to head up this new great threat to the world's peace? No," you say, "it leaves us cold. We can't see it."

Well, to tell the truth, neither does anyone else see it just that way any more. But still the fact remains that Islam does offer a challenge to the world, and that great human problems are bound up in it. These Moslem millions are a problem to themselves. Things have not gone as they expected. The great dreams of a vast world empire which were once partly realized have been dashed to the ground. In these modern

times a new plan and purpose for life has to be worked out or Islam is lost; and in the process of bringing Islam up to date we find the Moslem nations struggling along shoulder to shoulder with the rest of us in the common task of remaking the world.

The modern world is a vast kaleidoscope of change, in which all peoples, races and religions are part of the shifting pattern. With feverish activity mankind is busy either in proposing and promoting "new deals" in politics and religion or in reconditioning the old models. There has never been a time when there was such a baffling intermixture of human beings, races, philosophies and religions as we find in the world today; and struggling side by side with the other nations are the Moslem peoples, some clinging tenaciously to their traditions and ancient heritage, others eagerly working on the problems of adaptation and readjustment, and all wondering with the rest of us, "What next?"

#### THE AHMADIYA MOVEMENT

In the days when the nineteenth century was about to enter its final decade, Mirza Ghulam Ahmad sat much in meditation in his house in the village of Qadian in northern India. He had received a good education in Arabic, Persian, Urdu and the curriculum of Moslem orthodoxy; but he was thoughtful and studious beyond the average man of his community. Many things in India and the Moslem world at large disturbed him. He was distressed that under the lead-



ership of Sir Sayyid Ahmad Khan and his Aligarh reformers young Moslems seemed to be losing their faith altogether; but at the same time he was deadly opposed to the lifeless leadership of the *mullahs*, or Moslem clergy.

The more he read and meditated on this situation the more he was convinced that it was not peculiar to India alone, but that similar conditions prevailed throughout the Moslem world. Further, his close contact with the people of the two other great faiths of India, the Hindus and the Christians, enabled him to sense their spiritual hopes and aspirations.

Gradually it dawned upon him that the time was ripe for a new spiritual leadership in Islam, and about the year 1890 Mirza Ghulam Ahmad announced to the world that he had been called by Allah to undertake a special divine mission. He declared that he was the promised Mahdi of the Moslems, the great champion of Islam, who, the Traditions say, will come in the last days and convert the whole world to the true faith. Knowing that the Hindus looked for the coming of a new incarnation of the god Vishnu who would usher in a new age, he appealed to them also to accept him as their long expected savior. Turning to the Christians he announced that he was the Messiah Jesus who had returned to earth, and thus in him the second coming of Christ had been fulfilled! Indeed he so fully convinced himself and his followers that he was the Messiah that he formally took that title. Even to this day his sons, who succeeded him,

have held to this title, and some years ago when wandering in the bazaars of Lahore I saw an old Ford bearing in bold lettering on one of the doors the arresting title, Khalifat-ul-Masih, II, which being interpreted meant that the old Ford was the property of "The Second Successor to the Messiah" of Qadian!

All the old passion for the renewing of Islam and the revival of its ancient glory in the midst of this modern world began to burn in Mirza Ghulam Ahmad. He recalled how the sun never sets on the Moslem crescent flag; how Islam is the mightiest religion of the world next to Christianity; and how "it holds a world empire of human hearts in its grasp." He thought of the sixty thousand or more who annually come together from every nation under heaven to meet around the Kaaba at Mecca in celebration of the pilgrimage, all one in a common brotherhood and in the use of a common ritual in the Arabic tongue. He pictured himself as the one who, under the guidance of Allah, would arouse the Moslem world to a great revival of Islam that would bring all peoples of the world under the red crescent banner. He remembered how the Prophet Mohammed had sent out letters to the nations of the world inviting them to accept Islam. He, too, would challenge the world! He would set the whole world to thinking about Islam and would convince all the non-Moslem peoples that Islam was the perfect religion, superior to all others.

Accordingly he and his followers organized an extensive movement with the avowed purposes of spread-



ing the revival spirit in Islam and of conducting a vigorous missionary effort throughout the world among non-Moslems. This Ahmadiya movement, as it is called, has been a surprisingly bold effort. It has established mosques in New York, Chicago, London, Liverpool, Paris, and Berlin. The twenty-year record of one of its missionary societies has an interesting account of activities. Here is a brief summary of it:

1. The Woking (England) Moslem mission, the first such mission to the West, has a mosque which has been in use for many years. (There are said to be between two and three thousand British Moslems.)

2. The German Moslem mission was founded in 1924 in Berlin. Upwards of four hundred Germans have been won over to Islam. The magnificent mosque in Berlin was erected at an expense of more than fifty thousand dollars.

3. The Austrian Moslem mission was opened in Vienna in 1934.

4. The Java Moslem mission was founded in 1924 to save the Moslems of that island from Christian propaganda.

5. The holy Koran has been translated into three European languages. The English version alone has run up to thirty thousand copies, while its Dutch translation has been published by the Java mission.

6. The life of the holy Prophet has been translated into the following languages: English, Dutch, Polish, Italian, Turkish, Albanian, Hindi, Sindhi, Bengali, Gurmukhi, Tamil, Gujarati, Kanarese, Javanese, Malay, Siamese and Chinese.

7. Religious periodicals are being published in English, Dutch, German and Javanese.

8. Two high schools have been established in India to imbue the rising generation with the true Islamic spirit.

9. Research work is being carried on in other religions.
10. Arrangements have been made for preparing missionaries to carry on the work of the propagation of Islam in and outside India.
11. The free distribution of the English translation of the holy Koran and the life of the holy Prophet has been made by the thousands to libraries, ships, and to notable personages.
12. Miscellaneous literature in the form of tracts, amounting to seven million pages, has been published for the religious and social uplift of the Moslems.
13. Funds are being raised to start a Moslem mission in Spain, its aim being to win back to Islam that country "which has forsaken Christianity."
14. A branch of the society in Java is planning a mission to Holland.<sup>1</sup>

#### ABDUL HAMID AND PAN-ISLAMISM

While Mirza Ghulam Ahmad in his obscure Indian village of Qadian dreamed his dreams of spiritual conquest of the world in the latter part of the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth centuries, the caliph of the Moslem world, Abdul Hamid, in his luxurious palace by the Bosphorus, dreamed dreams also—dreams of Pan-Islamic power that would oust the exploiting, imperialist European powers from India, Egypt and North Africa. He hoped to see the day when it would be possible to establish a great bloc of independent Moslem nations of whose spiritual and political life the Turkish caliph would be the head. To further these ends the caliph joined Germany and

<sup>1</sup> Summarized from the *Report of the Lahore Anjuman of the Ahmadiya*, 1935.



the Central Powers in the World War, and sought to rally fellow Moslems throughout the world to his support by issuing the call for a *jihad*, or holy war. He vainly hoped that the Moslems of India, Egypt and the Sudan would revolt against the British; that their brothers in North Africa would overthrow the Italian, French, and Spanish rule; and that the Arabs would faithfully stand their ground.

But history now shows that Abdul Hamid "backed the wrong horse." The Moslems of India, Egypt, the Sudan and North Africa did not rise in revolt against their non-Moslem rulers; the Germans lost the war; Turkey was dismembered; and even the Arabs themselves staged a revolt in the desert which led to complete independence from the rule of the Turkish sultan. More than this, separate states were carved out of the Turkish Empire, and mandated governments were set up in Palestine, Syria, Iraq, and Transjordan, with the British and French assigned to guardianship. But the final crushing blow came when in 1921 Turkey overthrew the monarchy, abolished the old régime, and became a republic, and finally in 1924 put an end to the Turkish caliphate.

Today Pan-Islamism is dead. There is no caliph of the Moslems. There is no symbol of unity, and no unifying force other than the spiritual influence of the faith and ritual of Islam. Ineffective efforts have been made to revive the caliphate and to elect a new caliph. Suggestions have even been made that a Moslem league of nations be established and that the annual

pilgrimage to Mecca be the occasion for the regular meeting of this league. But up to date all attempts to achieve even a semblance of practical political unity among the Moslem peoples of the world have suffered defeat.

Turkey, the strongest and greatest of independent Moslem states, today refuses to have anything to do with such a proposal. On the contrary, under the guidance of their strong man, President Kamal Atatürk, the Turks appear to be far less influenced by religious than by national considerations. Islam it would seem means far less to them than nationalism. To a much less degree, of course, the same may be said of the other Moslem countries. Seeing no way in which Islam can again become politically all-powerful, the Moslems of Afghanistan, Egypt, Iran, Iraq, and Arabia, for instance, are doing all in their power to establish strong national governments, to develop their own national interests, and to take their rightful place in the League of Nations. They are jealous of their own religion and culture, strongly desire full independence where they do not have it, as in Egypt and Syria, and use such nationalistic slogans as "Egypt for the Egyptians" and "Syria for the Syrians."

The following quotation from an Arabic newspaper in Palestine shows that Moslems themselves are aware of the dangers of secularism:

A meeting of sheikhs from Egypt and India would mean much in defense of Islam against the wave of unbelief from



the West and against secularism, which will take away religion from education, wants modern laws instead of clerical, and hopes to weaken Islam under the name of nationalism. These dangers are threatening Islam in its very foundations and will destroy it in the hearts of the next generation. Moslems disobey their religion, and it may be heard said: "Of what use is it to bring outcastes or others into Islam, when some of the Moslem peoples leave Islam?"

Under the handicap of such political disunity there is no possibility of Islam's being able, even if it so desired, to confront the world with the old seventh century challenge of a holy war against the infidels. This is a bugaboo that is not likely ever to be revived again.

The names of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad and Abdul Hamid stand today as symbols of the challenge of Islam to the world in these modern times. The caliph's great political challenge of Pan-Islamism collapsed with the crumbling of the Ottoman Empire; but the spiritual challenge of Islam as found in the worldwide missionary effort of the Ahmadiya movement of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad is still very much alive. Its significance lies not so much in its achievements for the cause of Islam or in the number of its converts to the faith—for these have not been such as to alarm non-Moslems—but rather in the fact that it represents the ever present spiritual desire and aspiration of the whole Moslem world to see the faith of Islam triumph. In this fundamentally religious sense the Abode of Islam still looks upon people of other faiths as be-

longing to the Abode of War. In the spiritual realm Islam still challenges the world.

#### THE CHALLENGE OF NEED

Everywhere throughout the Moslem lands we are faced by the challenge of desperate human need, a need which very largely grows out of the religious ideas and ideals of the Islamic system itself.

Now it is interesting that some people take the position that one religion is as good as another; or, at least, that every people has a religion which satisfies them, and which is best adapted to their needs. They will tell you that devil worship is good enough for the African in his jungles; the worship of evil spirits is good enough for the animist among India's aborigines; and polytheism and idolatry are good enough for the Hindus of Hindustan. In the same way, Islam is good enough for the Arabs, Syrians, and Iranians—or at any rate they are satisfied with it, so why worry? The most that can be said for such a position as this is that it is utterly lacking in a proper sense of values. Even the Moslem himself would vigorously disagree with such a view, for he is very certain that Islam is not only superior to the other systems just mentioned, but that it is vastly superior to Christianity as well!

Then there are those who in a spirit of commendable appreciation feel that Christianity has much to learn from Islam. They feel that Islam is a kind of unitarian religion, and that if Christians do go to



Moslem lands, they should definitely go to share their experience, and learn as much as they can. They should not be primarily interested in winning converts to Christianity, but in interpreting the values in Christianity within the framework of the Islamic system, and in trying to make Moslems better Moslems. To this end they would maintain schools and hospitals, organize athletic teams to play football, hockey, and baseball, engage in all sorts of humanitarian and character building activities, but leave religion out of the picture entirely. There must be no Bible classes in schools or hospitals, no personal work, and no public preaching. Because of the persecution of converts no attempt must be made to create a church, and all that can be done is to work on the principle that ultimately the leaven will leaven the whole. Of course, in some countries like Turkey, this is the only policy that can now be followed, for there is no freedom to preach and teach.

But there is something deeply tragic about the Moslem world that lays hold of the person who takes his Christianity seriously. He cannot shake off that sense of tragedy; it persistently haunts him. He sees much in Islam to be approved and even admired, but he is conscious of a great emptiness at the heart of it. The Moslem knows God as King, whose will is law; he does not know God as Father, and the transforming power of his love. The Moslem declares the holy Koran is God's supreme revelation of his will to men, but rejects the revelation of God in Jesus Christ

and dismisses his supreme sacrifice as an idle tale. The Moslem regards sin as something of small consequence which can easily be righted by good works; he does not see that sin is not so much the outward act as a disease of the inner nature and requires a cure that comes from a power that is beyond oneself. In short, Islam's conception of God is not big enough to serve the deepest needs of man, and neither is its conception of revelation; while its conception of sin is far from going to the root of the matter. It is this basic weakness in the religious ideas of Islam which is responsible for the trail of tragedy which follows in its wake.

Finally, it must not be forgotten that of all the religions of the world Christianity is the Good Samaritan to the world's need. Wherever there is ignorance or oppression; wherever there is pain and suffering; wherever there are systems that crush or degrade the bodies or souls of men and impede their progress; wherever women and little children cry out for help—there Christianity must go, or Christ would be less than the Savior of the world. It is ultimately this need, then, that is the great and impelling challenge of the Moslem world, and along with the need there are innumerable open doors of opportunity.

#### THE OPPORTUNITY FOR MEDICAL MISSIONS

The interior of Arabia is one of the most inaccessible parts of the world to Europeans, but the power to relieve distress opens doors even there. Disease is



something which attacks rich and poor alike, high and low. The favorite wife of His Highness, Sultan Abdul Aziz ibn Saoud, ruler of Saoudi Arabia, was ill. In fact, she was very ill as she lay in the palace at Riadh, and the local Arabian *hakeems*, or doctors, had done all in their power without success. The king quickly dispatched messengers across the desert to summon the mission doctors from Bahrein. It is said throughout inland Arabia that next to the king, it would be difficult to name one man more popular than Dr. Louis P. Dame of the American Mission Hospital on the island of Bahrein in the Persian Gulf. On receiving the message from Riadh, the doctor and his associates started out at once and sped across the desert in the modern motor cars which the king had furnished for his guests. The rest of the story we shall hear in the words of Mr. G. D. Van Peurseem, who was himself a member of the party:

In exchange for the liberality of Ibn Saoud, Dr. Dame, Mrs. Van Peurseem and eleven assistants gave their time and services freely. Naturally the king and his household came first. . . . However, daily clinics were held for the public. Every forenoon except Sundays, two hundred and fifty patients were treated. Rich man, poor man, beggarman, women and children, everybody seemed to turn up at this daily clinic. . . . To these masses some forty cases of medicines were distributed. One of the assistants was kept busy giving intramuscular and intravenous injections for the men alone. This indicates that venereal diseases have become all too common in Saoudi Arabia. Someone has said that unless this is checked, it will certainly decrease

the population, if not exterminate certain sections altogether. . . .

The afternoons were devoted to surgery. Often the numbers of needy cases made it necessary for the doctor to continue into the hours of the night. As the news of the doctor's arrival radiated into the villages and hamlets, well-nigh hopeless cases were carried into the hospital. The Bedouins, not knowing that even to modern medicine and surgery there is a limit, brought victims of tuberculosis in its last stages. Forms of skin and bone, carried on stretchers, appeared every day; victims of venereal diseases, so repulsive that their faces were not to be shown to the public. One look at such a specimen is enough to leave one cold and chill for days and days. "An extreme case," the doctor says. "No, not extreme," says the Arab. "There are many like that in Hayil." But the *amir* [king] did not know this until the doctor came.<sup>1</sup>

It is a grim story but a true one, and illustrates how, generally speaking, throughout the Moslem lands there is need and opportunity for medical mission work. It is probably true that the devoted Christian doctors have opened more Moslem hearts to the truth of Christ's love than has any other type of missionary. If it were only possible to multiply a hundredfold the mission hospitals of Sheikh Othman, Basrah, Bahrein and Kuweit in Arabia, Quetta and Bannu on the Northwest Frontier of India, Tanta and Old Cairo in Egypt, Teheran and Meshed in Iran and Beirut in Syria, who could tell the mighty results for good that would follow throughout the Moslem world, not

<sup>1</sup> "Guests of King Ibn Saud," by G. D. Van Peurseem, in *The Moslem World*, April, 1936, pp. 116-17.



only in bringing the healing and the love of Christ to the poor, the suffering and the needy, but in creating better understanding between the peoples of the Moslem and the Christian lands?

#### THE OPEN DOOR OF EDUCATION

There is not only the challenge of physical need; there is the challenge of the great hunger for education and social reform. The demand for modern education is greater than ever before in every Moslem land.

In the far-away Sulu archipelago among the Philippine Islands, where half a million Moslem Moros live under the Stars and Stripes, a few years ago there was practically one hundred per cent illiteracy. Only a few *mullahs*, or priests, could read. The people were among the most fanatic and savage Moslems on the face of the earth. Order was maintained by the United States army with the greatest difficulty, and even so, wild outbursts were not uncommon.

Then a missionary was sent there to see what he could do. He went with fear and trembling, leaving his wife and children behind because it was not safe to take them. He soon discovered that the greatest problem of the Moros was illiteracy. With singular ability and rare tact and judgment he tackled the problem of adult education by the direct method of teaching the people to read. He prepared easy charts using the simplest words, and started in. His rule of procedure was one of cooperation. He would teach a

man two lessons only on condition that he would go out and teach two others what he had learned before receiving the third and fourth lessons, and so on down the line. The result has been that in some five years' time nearly half the adult population has been taught to read! The people have become enthusiastic learners, and are now demanding schools and literature. The hunger for education has been aroused. Today, Dr. Frank Laubach is looked upon by these Moros as their greatest friend. So striking have been the results of his work in the Philippines that he has been asked to visit many other countries in Asia and Africa to develop similar methods.

Even in a country like India the challenge of appalling illiteracy staggers one. After all the efforts made there by mission and government agencies, it still can be said that ninety per cent of the Moslem men are illiterate and ninety-eight per cent of the women—and this among a Moslem population of seventy-eight millions! Mission schools in Iran, India, Iraq, Syria, Egypt, and Turkey are thronged with Moslems who cannot be accommodated in other institutions. In many cases, or rather, in most cases, mission schools have been the pioneers in modern education in every one of these countries, and have contributed materially to the awakening and to the demand for constitutional government and constructive reforms.

In Iran, we are told by President Samuel M. Jordan of Alborz College, Teheran,



since the beginning of the century, American schools have been patronized by the leading men of the country. Among the students have been enrolled sons of the princes of the royal family, first and second cousins of former shahs, the only grandson of the present shah, sons of prime ministers and other cabinet ministers, of members of the *mejlis* (congress), of tribal chieftains, of provincial governors, and of other influential men from every corner of the land—boys who, whether educated or not, would be in the future years among the rulers of Iran. Probably no other school in the world has ever enrolled so many of the children of the leading men of any country as for the past thirty-five years have been enrolled in this college [the Presbyterian mission college in Teheran, now called Alborz College]. Our students imbibed liberal ideas, they agitated for reforms, they cooperated with other forward-looking patriots in transforming the medieval despotism of thirty years ago into the modern, progressive democracy of today.<sup>1</sup>

The same might be said of nearly every Christian college in Moslem lands. It most certainly applies to such well known institutions as the American University of Beirut; Robert College, Constantinople; the Forman Christian College, Lahore; Lucknow Christian College; St. John's College, Agra; the American University at Cairo, not to mention a host of others.

And one of the most important things that young men learn in these Christian colleges is how to cooperate, to pull together. As President Jordan puts it:

Iranian statesmen for years have mourned, "We Iranians do not know how to cooperate." But how do you teach

<sup>1</sup> "Constructive Revolutions in Iran," by Samuel M. Jordan, in *The Moslem World*, October, 1935.

people to cooperate, how do you teach them to "play the game"? Obviously by playing games, and so we introduced football, baseball, volleyball, basketball. . . . The result is that physical education with all these group games is a regular part of the school program for all of the schools of Iran. . . . Throughout the whole empire, young Iran is learning to "play the game" of life.<sup>1</sup>

Through this helpful service in education Iran is gradually coming to take her place in the ever enlarging family of modern nations. The same may be said of practically all the other leading Moslem nations of the world. It is a thrilling thing to lend a hand in an enterprise that is such a vital part of the task of rebuilding the world.

#### THE YOUNG MOSLEM LOOKS AT RELIGION

"Are you a Moslem?" I asked a young man as we stood talking together at Ur Junction in the heart of the Mesopotamian desert while waiting for the train for Baghdad. Ur Junction is the railway station near the site of the city of that name made famous by Abraham some five thousand years ago, because he left it and "went west to seek his fortune."

"Am I a Moslem?" repeated the young man. "Well, I was, but recently I joined the Anti-God Society. Today I am an atheist. I don't believe in religion. It divides people, and makes them fight each other, and hinders progress. Iraq would be better off without any religion at all. It would be better if we all gave up our

<sup>1</sup> "Constructive Revolutions in Iran."



senseless differences, and began to work together for the good of our country. Then the Jews, and these Assyrian Christians here"—pointing to the assistant stationmaster and his friends who were standing close by—"and the Moslems could make a great country out of this ancient land of Iraq. But as it is I see no chance."

"Are there many Moslems who have joined your Anti-God Society?" I asked.

"Not very many," he answered, "for the idea is new to us Moslems; we are a very conservative people. But we are spreading our atheistic ideas, and the number is growing slowly."

This from Iraq. But even India can tell something of the same story of disillusionment on the part of youth as they observe the futility of a religion that is lived on a basis of selfish concern for only the religious group or community to which the individual belongs. There is jealousy among the religions over special privileges; each is busy seeking to save itself and unaware of the great areas of human need which wait for unselfish service. Two things have produced this disillusionment in Iraq and India—first, Western education and the impact of Western materialistic and industrial civilization; and second, the insidious influence of anti-religious Russia.

Turkey also tells the same story in her own way. One Turkish writer in the paper *Uyanish* says:

We cannot accept any more the despotism of this world or of the next world, or that of a *softa* [the old Moslem

clergy]. We deposed Allah with the sultan. Our temples are the factories.<sup>1</sup>

Of course, these are extreme cases. Islam is not breaking up so fast as they suggest. But these illustrations do indicate a tendency of very serious import. They indicate that the youth of Moslem lands are slowly drifting away from their religious anchorage. They are abandoning belief in God and losing faith in the necessity of religion of any sort. Having dropped religion, the next step is to throw over accepted moral standards, to attempt to face life in one's own strength, to follow one's own impulses and desires.

#### THE CHALLENGE TO CHRISTIANITY

Such young people desperately need an interpretation of religion that will justify itself to their intelligence and will help them solve the pressing problems of life: the problems of human brotherhood and social justice, of sex and the position of women, of war and international relationships, yes, and of man and the future of the race. To young people of this sort Islam has lost its meaning for life, and in their ignorance they assume that all religion has lost its meaning and usefulness for life, too. An amazing challenge, both fresh and urgent, is presented by the educated young Moslems who have lost their way. The question is, Can Christianity be presented to them

<sup>1</sup> Refik Ahmed in *Uyanish*, August 15, 1929, quoted in *The Turkish Press*, p. 141. London, George Routledge & Sons, 1932.



in such a way that it will appeal as being of such vital and fundamental importance that they cannot meet life successfully without it? Only true disciples of Christ who are themselves living examples of his teachings are equal to this great challenge, the challenge to each one of us to live up to the ideals of Christ.

We cannot dodge this issue. It must be faced by everyone who takes life seriously. Many a young Moslem looks at the "Christian" West and wonders why it is called Christian. A book was published a few years ago by an Indian Moslem who had lived and traveled in Europe and America. He called it *Islam versus Christianity* and in it he dwelt on the very worst features of Western civilization—its gangsters and racketeering; its lynchings and inhuman treatment of the Negro; its city night clubs and the worst phases of immorality and loose living between the sexes; its Renos with their easy divorces; its daring daylight robberies and abominable kidnappings; and, last but not least, its freely flowing alcoholic liquors.

As compared with these things he attempted to prove that Islam had been far more successful as a religion in benefiting humanity than Christianity had been. But he failed to look for, much less uncover, the amazing achievements of Christianity in providing the foundations for multitudes of happy homes where the highest standards of Christian purity prevail; in maintaining vast numbers of schools and hos-

pitals and institutions of every kind for the needy and the oppressed; in inspiring great hosts of individuals with a deep and satisfying faith—men and women who practise the closest fellowship with God and who are giving their all to help forward the world's great causes. He did not mention these things, and thereby he failed to give a true picture of Islam versus Christianity.

The truth of the matter is that while there is much in our Western civilization of which we may be ashamed—as our Moslem friend has clearly pointed out, and which we know all too well—and while many of us individual Christians and the organized churches fall far short of our ideals, yet no case has been made out for our being ashamed of Christianity. At this point there is a vast difference between Islam and Christianity. Every one of the undesirable elements which have been noted in Islam is something that is rooted in the religion itself. They are all lawful: polygamy, child marriage, easy divorce, the keeping of concubines, slavery. But in Western lands, all the objectionable features of life exist in spite of the ideals and standards of Christianity. These evils cannot be fastened on Christianity as part and parcel of the system. One cannot find sanction for them in the teachings or example of Jesus Christ.

The final challenge of Islam to each Christian is to live as a Christian should. That is the hardest challenge of all. That is the last and most convincing argument, and the only adequate response to the Moslem's



challenge. How desperately the Moslem world needs this living argument! How difficult the task! The way, too, is dark with ancient prejudices and misunderstandings. But Christ, who said, "All power is given unto me. . . . Go ye therefore," and "Lo, I am with you alway," will be our strength and our companion. It was he who said, also, "I am the light of the world." He will lighten the darkness. For it is not alone Islam that challenges us, but Jesus Christ himself. He goes before us into every area of need throughout the Moslem world. His is the example of the deepest sympathy for human suffering and sacrificial love in ministering to it. He leads the way and bids us follow him in the glorious task of rebuilding the world, a world in which there shall be neither Jew nor Moslem, neither Hindu, Buddhist, nor Confucianist, nor even Christian in any narrow communalistic sense, but all shall be one brotherhood of man in Christ, and all sons and daughters in the common family of God the Father.

## GLOSSARY

For a number of these words more than one spelling is current, and for them variant spellings are given. These variations are due to two facts: first, that some writers prefer the more scientific and others the more customary rendering of Arabic words; and second, that pronunciation varies in different regions. There are some consonants in Arabic which are unlike any in English. No attempt will be made to indicate these. Vowels are pronounced as in the Romance languages. Accented *a* is the same as *a* in father, though somewhat flatter in tone; unaccented *a* is also long, but it is pronounced more hurriedly. Approximate phonetic pronunciation of a few of the following words is suggested in italic type, although as already noted it is impossible to convey an accurate idea of the sound of certain consonants.

AH MA DI'YA (*ah-ma-dee'ya*). The name of a modern sect of Moslems who follow the teaching of Mirza Ghulam Ahmad.

AL LAH'. God; corresponds to the Jewish term Jehovah.

A MIR', A MEER' or E MIR'. A ruler.

A ZAN'. The call to prayer.

CA'LIPH, KHA LIF' (*ka-leef'*) or KHA LI'FAH (*ka-lee'fa*). Leader; title of the head of the Moslem state.

DER'VISH or DAR WISH'. A member of a religious order or brotherhood.

FA QIR' or FA KIR'. A religious mendicant.

HA DITH' or HA DIS'. The Traditions; the authoritative collections of the sayings and deeds of Mohammed and his companions.

HA'FIZ. One who has learned the Koran by heart.

HA'JI. One who has performed the pilgrimage, or *hajj*, to Mecca.

HA REM' (*ha-reem'*). The women's apartments in a Moslem household.

HE CI'RA or HIJ'RAH. The migration or flight of Mohammed to Medina.

IB LIS'. The devil.

ID. Festival. There are two great festivals: the festival celebrated after the pilgrimage with the sacrifice of sheep and camels in Arabia and cows in India, and the festival at the close of the fast of Ramadan.



- IH RAM'**. The sacred garb donned by the pilgrim as he approaches Mecca and worn during the rest of the pilgrimage.
- IJ MA'**. Agreement among the learned doctors of the Moslem community on any fundamental change in Moslem doctrine or practice that is generally accepted as lawful and right; one of the methods by which liberal Moslems consider that Islam may be modernized and reformed.
- I MAM'**. One who leads the congregation in prayer; also the term used by the Shiites for the leader of their sect.
- I MAN'**. Faith; especially the statement of the six articles of faith.
- I'SA (ee'sa)**. The Moslem name for Jesus.
- IS LAM'**. Literally, resignation or submission to the will of God.
- Ji HAD'**. Religious war waged by Moslems against unbelievers for the sake of extending the faith, power and glory of Islam.
- JINN** (plural of **JINNI**). Spirit beings, some evil, others good.
- KAA'BA**. Literally, cube; the central shrine of Islam in Mecca.
- KA'FIR**. An infidel; one who does not believe in Islam.
- KA'LI MA (ka'lee-ma)**. The short form of the Moslem creed: "There is no god but Allah, and Mohammed is the apostle of Allah."
- KIS'WA**. The cloth covering of the Kaaba, which is renewed every year at the time of the pilgrimage.
- MAH'DI**. Literally, the directed one; the ruler Moslems expect to appear on earth in the Last Days to convert the whole world to Islam.
- MAS'JID**. A Moslem mosque, or place of worship.
- MU EZ'ZIN** or **MU EDH'DHIN**. The one who gives the call to prayer.
- MU HAR'RAM**. The first month of the Mohammedan year, in which the Shiites celebrate the martyrdom of their saints, Ali, Hasan and Husain.
- MUL'LAH**. A learned man; one of the Moslem clergy.
- PIR**. A religious teacher or guide, particularly one belonging to an order of dervishes.
- PUR'DAH** or **PAR'DAH**. Literally, curtain; seclusion of women of social position.
- QIB'LA**. The direction in which to face for prayer, i.e., toward Mecca.
- RA MA DAN'**. The ninth month of the Moslem calendar, during which fast is observed from earliest dawn to sunset.
- SA LAT'**. The Arabic term for ritual prayer.
- SAY'YID (sy'yid)**. Literally, lord; a term or title used with personal names to indicate descent from the Prophet Mohammed.
- SHAI TAN' (shy-tan')**. Another name for the devil; see **Iblis**.
- SHA RI'AT**. The sacred or canon law.
- SHEIKH (shayk)**. Leader; head of tribe; religious leader.

- SHI'ITE (*shee'ite*). The name of the sect composed of the followers of Ali, the son-in-law of Mohammed and the fourth caliph.
- SUL TAN'. Ruler; emperor.
- SUN'NA. The customs sanctioned by Mohammed and his companions; handed down in the *Hadith*.
- SUN'NITE. The name of the largest sect of Moslems, so called because they follow the *Sunna*, or Traditions.
- SU'RA. A chapter of the Koran.
- WAH HA'BI. A follower of the puritanical reformer of Arabia, Mohammed ibn Abdul Wahhab.
- WAKF or WAQF. A religious endowment; property dedicated to pious uses.
- ZA KAT'. Legal alms.
- ZE NA'NA. The Indian and Persian term for the women's apartments; see harem.
- ZIK'R. The ritual used by the dervish orders for inducing a state of mystic ecstasy.



## READING LIST

THE following books are but a few of the many works on the Moslem world, but they will serve as a guide for those who wish to widen their knowledge of the subject. The views of the writers of these books are not necessarily in harmony with those of the author. Several older books have been included because of their special value as reference sources. Although some of them are out of print, they may be consulted in most libraries. Leaders of classes using this book will wish to obtain "Islam Awakens," by Herrick B. Young, a course for senior groups studying Moslem lands. This is available from denominational literature headquarters for twenty-five cents.

### HISTORY OF ISLAM

- Early Development of Mohammedanism, The.* David S. Margoliouth. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1914. \$2.75.
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- Mohammed and the Rise of Islam.* David S. Margoliouth. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1905. \$2.50.
- Mohammed: The Man and His Faith.* Tor Andrae. Tr. by Theophil Menzel. New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1936. \$3.50.
- Spirit of Islam, The; or The Life and Teachings of Mohammed.* Sayyid Maulavi Amir Ali. London, Christopher's, 1935. 20/-. New edition.

### ISLAM AS A RELIGION

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- Outline of the Religion of Islam, An.* H. U. Weitbrecht Stanton. London, Missionary Equipment and Literature Supply, Ltd., 1925. (Available through the Missionary Education Movement, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York. 40 cents.)
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- Crusades, The: Iron Men and Saints.* Harold Lamb. Garden City Publishing Co. \$1.00.
- Crusades, The: The Flame of Islam.* Harold Lamb. Garden City Publishing Co. \$1.00.
- Eclipse of Christianity in Asia, The: From the Time of Muhammad till the Fourteenth Century.* Laurence E. Browne. New York, The Macmillan Co., 1933. \$3.50.
- Islam, a Challenge to Faith.* Samuel M. Zwemer. New York, Student Volunteer Movement, 1907. 75 cents.
- Mecca and Beyond.* Edward M. Dodd and Rose Wilson Dodd. Boston, Central Committee on the United Study of Foreign Missions and the Missionary Education Movement. 1937. Cloth, \$1.00; paper, 50 cents.
- Moslem Faces the Future, The.* T. H. P. Sailer. New York, Missionary Education Movement, 1926. Cloth, 50 cents; paper, 25 cents.
- Moslem Women Enter a New World.* Ruth Frances Woodsmall. New York, Round Table Press, 1936. \$3.00.
- Tales from Moslem Lands.* William W. Reid. New York, Friendship Press, 1927. New and revised edition. Cloth, \$1.00; paper, 60 cents.
- Vital Forces of Christianity and Islam.* Six Studies by Missionaries to Moslems. New York, Oxford University Press, 1915. \$1.20.



- What Is This Moslem World?* Charles R. Watson. New York, Friendship Press, 1937. Cloth, \$1.00; paper, 60 cents.  
*Young Islam on Trek.* Basil Mathews. New York, Friendship Press, 1926. Cloth, 50 cents; paper, 25 cents.

INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES

- Arab at Home, The.* Paul W. Harrison. New York, Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1924. \$1.00.  
*Arabian Peak and Desert.* Ameen Fares Rihani. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1930. (Out of print.)  
*Between the Desert and the Sea.* I. Lilius Trotter. London, Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1929. 6/-. (Algeria.)  
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*Ibn Saud: The Puritan King of Arabia.* Kenneth Williams. New York, Peter Smith, 1933. (Out of print.)  
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*Making of Modern Iraq, a Product of World Forces, The.* Henry A. Foster. Norman, University of Oklahoma Press, 1935. \$4.00.  
*Malaysia Mosaic: A Story of Fifty Years of Methodism.* Nathalie T. Means. New York, Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1936. 50 cents.  
*Mediterranean Lands, The.* Marion I. Newbiggin. New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1924. \$2.75.  
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- Palestine at the Crossroads.* Ladislav Farago. New York, G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1937. \$3.50.
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# A MAP OF THE

This is a detailed map of Africa and its surrounding regions. The map shows the outlines of major countries and territories, including Spain, France, Italy, Germany, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Rumania, Bulgaria, Yugoslavia, Greece, Turkey, Syria, Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Kenya, Uganda, Congo, Angola, Nigeria, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Senegal, Mauritania, Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. Major cities are marked with dots and labeled, such as London, Paris, Madrid, Rome, Athens, Cairo, Alexandria, Damascus, Baghdad, Tehran, Moscow, Leningrad, and Johannesburg. The map also shows the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, the Gulf of Aden, the Indian Ocean, and the Atlantic Ocean. The title 'A MAP OF THE' is printed at the top in large, bold, capital letters.

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# MOSLEM WORLD

